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THE
Church of Christ
IN
BRISTOL,

Recovering her Vail out of the
hands of them that have smitten
and wounded her, and taken it away.

BEING,

A just and necessary Vindication, from a
false and scandalous imputation cast upon her by
Dennis Hollister, formerly a Member of her, but
now an Apostate from, and an opposer of
those Waies, Truths, and People, which
once he seemed zealous for.

As appears by a late Pamphlet put forth by him, cal-
led, *The Skirts of the Whore discovered*.

With some particular words, from some particular per-
sons whom he hath by name abused and reproached.

Likewise a word by *Thomas Ewen*, unto what concerns him
in the said Pamphlet, and also to the later part of ano-
ther Book, called, *Satan enthroned in his
Chair of Pestilence*.

1 Tim. 4. 1. Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the later times some shall
depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and doctrines of Devils.

Acts 20. 30. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things,
to draw away disciples after them.

Isa. 10. 24. O my People that dwellest in Sion, be not afraid of the Assyrian.

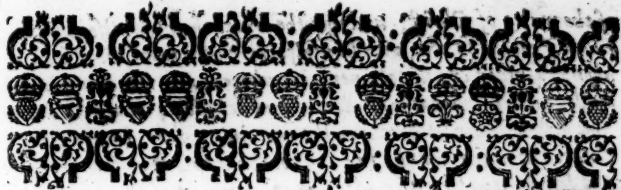
London, Printed for Thomas Brewster, at the three Bibles at the
West-end of Pauls, 1657.

1940

1941

London: Printed by Thomas Kneller, at the Golden Ball in St. Dunstons Church-yard, 1711.

1911



T O T H E R E A D E R.

Courteous Reader,



I is but little pleasure or delight, to the Authors of the ensuing Papers, that they should fill the world, or take up thy pretious time with matters of this nature, there being at this day so many things, of so much higher concernment, for the minds of immortal Souls to be taken up with, and seriously imployed about: But we being (to our grief, and against our wills, forced herennto,) for the vindication of the Truth, and justification of the waies thereof,) by a late scandalous and ridiculous Pamphlet, put forth and published by one Dennis Hollister of Bristol, once a Member of this Church, and a man as famous for professing the Truth, as now infamous for and by his Apostacy from it, opposition to it, and violence against it; Who, upon the first coming of the People called Quakers, to this City, did in a short time fall in with them, own them, and plead for them; and by his so doing, drew many a poor Soul out

To the Reader.

of the waies of Christ, and into the waies of those miserable deluded People, so that with himself, there rent from this Church, about eighteen or nineteen persons, who are now wandering in the dark, and blind paths of deceit and delusion, towards death and destruction; Whereupon the remaining part, (and through Grace the major part by far) of the Church, did after seeking the Lord, and seriously advising together, send Brethren, first to enquire after him and them, and to know the grounds of their absents, but some would return no answer at all, others very contemptuously, slighting and scorning the Church in this their act, with many revilings as the manner of those People is: After some months time, the Church sent three Brethren to admonish them of their great evil and danger, &c. A Copy of which Admonition is in the following Papers, as likewise a particular Admonition to Dennis Hollister, setting before him five sore and palpable evils, which we knew he was guilty of, and that every tittle of it was both true and obvious, though he doth with a most impudent and shameless face deny it, railing at the Church for their so doing, and instead of bearing the Admonition, or acknowledging his evils, did prepare a Letter with this Inscription, For the People called Independents; And by his subtilty engaged two of our Brethren to present it to the Church, putting such conditions upon them, as might best accomplish his designs, as that it must be openly read in a full meeting, &c. He likewise speaking to some of the Church whom he had still an influence upon, and hopes to draw off, that they should be sure to be there at the reading of that Letter, by which some of us came to understand his design, and that his Letter was not to give any account to the Church of the things whereof he was admonished, but rather to stagger and draw away more of the Congregation to himself, and to those People and waies, unto whom he was already departed.

Which thing is since evident by many passages in his Papers as that in his Epistle to the Reader, where he hath these words, viz. My just and necessary defence is kept from the simple hearted amongst them, after whom my soul longs, and for whose sakes it was principally intended, &c. By which all men may see that his principal intent was not to answer or satisfy

To the Reader.

the Church, but rather to draw away some from it; he also giving out, there were yet such a certain number of persons, naming of them, that should yet come away: (which the Lord through the riches of his Grace hath hitherunto prevented) and those persons in particular, are more confirmed and established in the Truth, and against the principles and waies of those People, and much by his late Book, it being so filled with rage and fury, envy and bitterness, false accusations, and rash condemnations, having nothing in it like the Spirit of Christ; but the Church taking into consideration his Letter, and first finding that he himself was out of Gods way; secondly, that he had refused to hear the Church by their Messengers sent unto him; thirdly, that he did not own us as a Church in the Superscription of his Letter; and fourthly, understanding his design to be as aforesaid, to draw away more if he could, &c. Hereupon his Letter was not opened, but returned back and delivered to his Man-servant in his Shop, himself being then absent; but this did so enrage him, he seeing himself so far disappointed of his ends and aims, (and the Church in some short time after, sending three Brethren again the second time, to admonish him and the rest, according to Scripture rule, Mat. 18. Tit. 3. 10.) that he hath hereupon published, that most scandalous Pamphlet, called, The Skirts of the Whore discovered, and the mingled People in the midst of her, &c. In which he doth most unchristian-like abuse the whole Church, stiling her a Synagogue of Satan, and a Cage of unclean and hateful Spirits, with many heaps of slanders and falsities, &c. to the dishonor of the name of Christ, and the reproach of his waies and People, and to the defaming of many of those, whom God, thorough rich Grace, hath preserved faithful in this apostatizing day.

We could not therefore (without being guilty of, or accessory to his sin and evil) let his folly go unreproved, but have set forth these few plain words, of truth and soberness, aiming at his confutation, the truths justification, our own vindication, and others information and satisfaction, desiring the Christian Reader, to weigh well our condition, judge impartially of our wrong, and help us affectionately by thy prayers; and so we
commit

To the Reader.

commit both thee and our selves, unto him who will one day clear the innocent, bringing forth their righteousness as the light, and their just dealing as the noon day; in the mean time we rest and remain; Reader, thy friends if thou be one that art grieved for the afflictions of Joseph, and art sensible of this day of Jacobs trouble, and art longing for the welfare of Sion, and walking in the Faith of the Gospel.

Then are we thy companions in tribulation, for the Faith and Testimony of Jesus.

The Brethren of the Church

in BRISTOL,

R. P. T. E. I. A.

R. M. R. S. B. H.



Reader,



READER ;

Thou art desired further to take notice, that Separation from a true Church of Christ and Communion of Gods People, is a dangerous thing :

First, it is sharply threatned by God, Heb. 10. 38, 39.

Secondly, severely punished, 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.

Thirdly, by this they discover themselves both to the Church with whom they walked, and also to those that are without, that they are the men and women who have not a true foundation, but onely have received some large measures of illumination, and common gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, and so fall away, and by their Apostacy, evidence their hypocrisie : Let no man think that the good can depart from the Church, wind blows not away the Wheat but the vain Chaff, 1 John 2. 19. They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt, have continued with us, but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not of us. Now to prevent the spreadings of the spirit of Anti-christ and his subtil endeavours to draw more from Jesus Christ, ought not the Church from whom these persons are departed in obedience to the Command of God, and out of love to the souls of those that have cast the Ordinances of God behind their backs, send two or three of their Members in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and in the tender bowels of pity, to beseech, admonish, and warn them to repent of their sins, and refrain from their evil waies, and return to the Truth, Faith, and waies of the

the Lord Jesus Christ, recorded in the Gospel? 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. and so in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth, that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will, &c. Let the Reader seriously consider, whether the Church is not engaged by her Head and Husband Jesus Christ, Mat. 18. from 15. to 20. vers. compared with Titus 3. 10. &c. thus to admonish and warn her deluded back-slidden Members, although perhaps some of them will not hear, as in Prov: 10: 17. Others reject both the Reproof and the Reprovers, Prov: 15: 10, 12.

And lastly, perhaps another laies open his folly to the whole Nation, in casting dirt in the face not only of the Reprovers, but on the whole Church it self that sent them, and so endeavour to shame them both, see Prov: 9: 7. compared with Prov: 15: 12. Our Saviour tells us, Mat: 11: 19. that Wisdom is justified of none but of her Children; and therefore his Church may not expect justification, but rather condemnation from those that are gone out from her as the snuff of a Candle.

If it be sufficient to be accused who can be found innocent, it is the crown of those that remain stedfast in their substantial Principles, to be reproached by those that did once seemingly own them, and afterwards for want of grace backslid from them, &c.



An ANSWER of a Church of
Christ in *Bristol*, (who desireth and endea-
voureth according to the measure of light
and strength that they have received from
Christ their Head, to comply with him
in waiting upon him in all the Ordinan-
ces of the Gospel, which many cast be-
hind their backs ;) unto *Dennis Hollister*,
once a visible Member, but now a pro-
fessed *Quaker*, &c.

Dennis Hollister,



Id you never read that the Church of Christ
in Scripture is resembled to a natural Bo-
dy, wherein are many Members united
each to other, and most of them to one
Head, and by one Spirit ? now as in the
natural Body there may be many infirmi-
ties ; so also in the mystical Body some-
times it may be subject to distempers, by undigested hu-
mors, the want of through closing with divine truths, or
the receiving in of untruths, may occasion a surfeit ; some-
times windy humors, pride, high mindedness, and giving
heed

need to lying Spirits, by some of its Members may distemper it; sometimes feverish heats of violent headiness, instead of well tempered zeal for God and godliness may inflame it, so that many parts of it are sorely laid open to infections, from divers that seem to be of it, or converse with it. Art not thou the man, or at least one of them; oh! who hath his eyes in his head and doth not see, who hath his ears open and doth not hear, who hath his tongue untied, and doth not speak to vindicate the undeceived's innocency, as well as to publish your folly, in answer to a little Pamphlet, called, *The Skirts of the Whore discovered, &c.* containing in it many things too low and beneath a serious Christians persuing or reading, much more the answering; it being in the middle and both ends stufte with so many unfavoury and unchristianlike expressions, yet we shall take the Lords counsel, *Prov. 26. 5.* and so answer the Author, lest he should be wise in his own conceit: in which Answer, we shall not recite all the Absurdities and vain boastings, and untruths, &c. yet being, as before, beneath a Christian, much more a whole Church, to spend pretious time, either to read or answer, &c. neither shall we at present so lay open your folly in all things, that we have heard or seen, lest our Answer should be seven times as big as your charge. Now to proceed, consider that as every word of God is true, so hath it some more special time of fulfilling: now we read *Acts 20. 30.* *Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.* O how truly is this Scripture fulfilled this day upon us and you; first, in your departing from us, and now in those perverse things written and spoken by you, to draw away disciples after you, as is cleat in many of those expressions in your Letter.

We have of late met with a little Book put forth by you, the Title of which when we had read, and seriously considered the People included and intended by you in those expressions, we could not but even stand amazed to think, unto what a height of Impudency and Malignity you are already come, and whither may not a poor fallen creature run if God stop him not? Is it not a high degree of *Luciferian*

Israhel pride, for a poor creature, to set his foot upon the necks of all the Assemblies and Churches of the Saints this day in *England and Wales*, calling them the Whore, (as your expressions must needs import) for if this Church in *Bristol* be the Skirts of the Whore, then other Churches in your account must needs be the Whore, we being indeed but as the Skirts, or out-casts of *Sion* : but for your hard censures we shall leave to him that holdeth the seven Stars in his right hand, and that walketh among the golden Candle-sticks ; in the mean time we shall take up *David's* resolution, when *Shimei* cursed him, 2 *Sam.* 16. 12. *It may be the Lord will look on our affliction, (or tears) and that the Lord will requite good for his cursing this day.* Oh how do the daughters of the *Philistim* rejoice, and the uncircumcised triumph ? Will not every prophane person that seeth us go in the street, say, lo there goes one of the skirts of the Whore, one of the Synagogue of Satan, one of the unclean birds, &c. and if we should reprove them for it, will they not say, that one of your selves have written and published it.

Oh ! had it been a *Turk*, a *Heathen*, or a professed enemy to Christ, that had done this, we could have born it, but that one who had tasted of the good word of God, and knowingly professed the Truth, for him to lift up his heel against Christ, and to crucifie him afresh in his Members, and put him to open shame, how will you look the Lord Jesus in the face at his appearing.

Poor man, you often told us there was some *Judas* in the Church, but little did we think that ever you would have acted so like *Judas*, as first to betray us with a kiss, calling us friends, and then deliver us into the hands of our enemies to scourge us with their tongues, and to spit in our faces, and so to condemn us and the way of truth which we profess, hardning their hearts against it ; yea, will not all that pass by clap their hands, hiss, and wag their heads at us, and say, is this a Church of *Bristol*, that men use to call an Assembly of *Sion* ? &c. are these your gathered Churches, about which there hath been so much contending of late ? nay then we will continue in our Parish Assemblies still,

we will never believe separation to be the way of God, nor any of the separated Congregations to be the Churches of Christ, but rather the Synagogues of Satan, &c. O! are not these the thoughts and sayings of many at this day? and how shall we answer these things? Must we not make our solemn addresses unto God? and say as *Nehemiah 4. 4, 5.* *Hear O our God for we are despised, and turn his reproach upon his own head &c.*

You also stile us the mingled People, whom you reproachfully call the *Independent, Baptized, &c.* O poor man, was it not enough that you had often spoken reproachfully against that blessed Institution of Christ, which he in his own person practised when he was about thirty years of age, *Luke 3. 21, 23.* and left as a standing Ordinance of the New Testament to all Generations till his coming again, you calling it as you have often done, that ugly thing of Baptism, and so taking it quite away, neither practising it upon your children for many years, nor allowing it to believers; but that you should now with despiteful hatred open your mouth in blasphemy against God, and against his Tabernacle.

Is it a light thing that you have cast off, and do neglect to practise the Commands and Ordinances of Jesus Christ, written in his word; but you must write contemptuously against them, that do in conscience and obedience unto him, walk in the practise of them: you call us a mingled people, you might possibly have spoken true, had you said so of us before you and the rest left us, for we had (as it is to be feared) a company of rotten Professors mingled amongst us, some of which never brought any great honor to Christ, but since you and they left us, we do not know any soul in the Church, but is able to give a good account of their Faith in Christ, and are careful to walk in all the waies of Christ, so far as they have obtained: But for that mingling the which you mean, of persons differing in their judgments about somethings, &c. you know in your own conscience, that it was and is the principle of this Church to own and receive any that are truly godly, though differing in some things; and so you your self did readily receive our Brother *Simpson* though baptized, and you gave way to a
 another

nother of the Church to be baptized; though now you scornfully stile us a mingled People.

But the Church of *Corinth*, or the Church of the *Romans*, or the Church of *Philippi*, among whom there were many that did differ in their Judgments about some things, yet were not stiled a mingled people, a harlot, &c.

But had some of those that went with you been faithful to their light, to have practised the Ordinance of Baptism, when they were convinced of it, they might have been some of the mingled too, as you call us; and what a preservative that might have been to them, we shall not determine, onely this is observable, that there was not, nor is not one of all those that have practised the Ordinance of Baptism with us that have fallen away, but onely one that was long before drawn away by the People called *Free-willers*. You say we call our selves a Church of Christ in *Bristol*, &c. We answer, hath not Christ called us so, and owned us so? surely you and others have solemnly professed, that Christ hath evidently manifested his presence in this Church; besides, you and others can testifie that she was at first rightly constituted; according to the light that God gave to his People in the work of gathering Churches at that time, but it may be you will say, she is grown carnal and become a harlot, &c.

We shall not proudly boast, but humbly acknowledge both to the Lord and to men, that we have many weaknesses and failings, which is matter of daily grief and complaint; but where do you find that ever Jesus Christ did unchurch a People for such weaknesses as they did acknowledge and bewaile, so long as they did not cast off him, nor the faith of him, nor their obedience to him; read over the Epistles written to the Churches, either *Corinth*, or the Churches of *Galatia*, or the seven Churches of *Asia*, among whom there were many very great weaknesses and miscarriages; pray read and consider, *1 Cor.* 5. 1. *2 Cor.* 12. 20, 21. *Rev.* 2. 3rd and yet Christ nor his Apostles doth not unchurch them; and who are you then, that durst so proudly set your foot upon the neck of this poor Church, and trample her down as a harlot, a Synagogue of Satan? &c.

Again,

Again consider, who were those that are said to be of the Synagogue of Satan, *Rev. 2. 9 & 3. 9*. It was not the Churches that were called so, for Christ owned them as Churches, and stiled them so, though they had many miscarriages; but those that were stiled of the Synagogue of Satan, were a company of proud boasters, that said they were Jews and Apostles, but did lie and were not; so now consider, who are those at this day, that call themselves Apostles, and boast of perfection; do any of us do so, or do not they that ye own do so; and hath not the Church of *Bristol* tryed them and their Doctrins, and found them lyars, and their Doctrins false? as the Church of *Ephesus* did, *Rev. 2. 2*. witness *James Naylor*.

Christopher Atkinson and others, whose Books some of us have read and tryed, and have found them to be contrary to the glorious Gospel of the grace of God, which was preached by the true Servants of God, and therefore have upon a good ground rejected them according to the counsel of the Spirit of God, *Gal. 1. 8. 9. 2 John 10. vers.* But you say positively, that we are found to be a Synagogue of Satan; was it ever heard that any man, either Prophets or Apostles, or any that feared God, or expected to give an account of his words and actions, did assume that boldness as thus to judge a people professing godliness, every one of which are able to give a good account of their faith in Jesus, and that do strive to walk up to what they know? &c. Is not this to take the place of Jesus Christ, whose prerogative alone it is to try hearts and judge persons? &c. Did you not say truly, when you said you did not know Christ? and might you not have said as truly, you did not acknowledg him? for certainly did you ever think to stand before him to give an account of your hard speeches, you could never speak and write thus.

Oh that you would consider, what you have spoken and written to the grief of Christs wounded ones, *Psal. 69. 26*. If it were better that a millstone were hanged about a mans neck, and he cast into the Sea, than that he should offend one of Christs little ones, *Matt. 18. 6*. How sad is it then for you to offend and grieve, judge and condemn near 60 persons,

persons, calling them a Synagogue of Satan? &c. and that for no other cause, but that after praying for you, and mourning over you, we sent three times in love and pity to admonish you of the evil of your way; you should now break out thus violently against us? O blush and roul your self in the dust, that if yet the day of Grace, and door of Mercy be not shut against you. You say it is in answer to a charge brought against you by some of the Members, &c. Truly we could have been glad that you had spared us that pains; and had not conscience of our duty, and love to the name of the Lord, and to your soul prevailed with us, more than any delight we had in that work, you had never heard of us in that kind. You say it is, by you, for the sake of the simple hearted among us, published; blessed be the Lord there are some simple plain honest hearted amongst us, had you and the rest been so, no doubt you would have stayed with us; and thus much for the first branch of your Title page.

We observe that you begin your Epistle to the Reader, as likewise your Book, with the word outward fellowship, &c. Truly we shall easily grant, that your fellowship in the things of God, was but outward; for had it been inward and spiritual in truth and sincerity, you would, no doubt, have continued in it, but as it is written, *1 John 2. 19. They went out from us, because they were not of us.* We shall not spend time to answer every passage in your Letter, lest as Solomon speaks, *Prov. 26. 4. we should be like unto you;* and yet we shall answer some things, lest as *Prov. 26. 5. you should be wise in your own conceits.* As for those Scripture expressions in your Book, though misapplied by you, yet we hope we shall consider them, and examine our selves by them, though not as they come from you, but as they are the words of God: and as for those taunts, scorns, false accusations, judgings and condemnations, of which your Pamphlet is full, we hope we may as we have opportunity spread them before the Lord, as *Hazekiah* did the Letter that he received, *Isa. 37. 14.* we being otherwise taught than to render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but rather to bless, *1 Pet. 3. 9.* having the example of Christ herein, as well

well as a Precept hereto, *1 Pet. 2. 23. Mat. 5. 44.* yet we cannot but take notice of the absurdity of your arguing and proceeding, wherein you first beg the question, and then draw what inferences you please: you first stile us a Synagogue of Satan, &c. and then heap up threatnings against us as such, &c. much like the heathen persecutors of old, who would first wrap the Saints in the skins of Beasts, and then set the dogs upon them to tear them, &c. Would you not count it an absurd thing if any man should come to you, and heap up all the Scriptures that speak against murderers, Adulterers, Drunkards, Swearers, Lyers, Theeves, &c. and apply them unto you, taking it for granted that you are such a one; and then ask you if this be not Scripture? &c. Or on the other side, if one should take all the Scriptures that speak comfort to the true Saints, in a suffering and persecuted condition, and apply them to a common thief that is cast in prison for his wickedness, or to a Malefactor that is going to suffer justly for his evil deeds? &c.

Now this is just your way of reasoning, (and many others with you) first to heap up multitudes of Scriptures that speak against the Whore of Babylon, against Anti-christ, against the Beast, and the false Prophets, against Hypocrites and Rejectors of the Gospel, and against other ungodly and wicked persons, &c. and apply all this to whom you please, either to the Churches of Christ, or to the faithful preachers of the Gospel, or to any other godly people; right or wrong, if they stand in your way, you conclude they are such because you call them so, whereas they may as soon prove the former things against you, as you can prove the later against them; so likewise the comforts and promises made to suffering Saints, may as well be applyed to a common thief, &c. As to some of those that you stile the Servants and Witnesses of Jesus, and this we find was *Rabshaketh* his way of arguing with *Hezekiah*, *2 Kings 18. 22.* Now had *Hezekiah* been the man, and had he done the things that *Rabshaketh* there charged him with, then he had reasoned rightly, but *Rabshaketh* was mistaken in his foundation taking the things for granted, whereas there was no such matter, for godly *Hezekiah* had done no such thing, onely *Rabshaketh*

Isaiah by his wit and subtilty framed such arguments as he thought might accomplish his design, namely to draw away the poor *Israelites* out of *Jerusalem*, where God had set them, and from *Hezekiah* whom God had set over them, to come forth to their enemies, as you may read at large, 2 *Kings* 18. 30, 31, 32. and therefore do you consider a little, what if you should be mistaken as *Rabshakeh* was, who was as confident as you are; and suppose that some of them (at least) whom you have cryed down as false Prophets and Deceivers, should be found the Servants of Christ, or that those Churches in *England*, that you or some of your way call the well favoured Harlots, or that this poor despised people in *Bristol*, that you so contemptuously trample upon, calling them a Harlot, a Synagogue of Satan, &c. should at last be found the Churches of Christ, and that he should own them as his People, his Spouse, the dearly beloved of his Soul, and as those whom he had shed his blood for, and given Grace unto? Oh! how will you then be confounded? &c.

And why may you not be mistaken, seeing you have been mistaken thus long, though few men upon earth were more confident of, and violent for some things than you have been, and yet you have been mistaken, as you now say? therefore take heed, cease judging of Churches, persons or things, but leave that till he come, whose right it is to judge; and who will judge right, but if you shall go on still to judge us, we shall make our application to the Lord, as *David* did, *Psal.* 17. 1, 2. *Hear the right O Lord, &c. Let our Sentence come forth from thy presence.* But the great matter you harp upon is, that your Letter could not be received nor read in the Church, &c. Some of us had three reasons against it, first, because it was not directed to the Church, but as it were in a deriding manner, viz. *To the People called Independents*, though now you joyn Baptized with them; therefore if you would not own us as a Church, we might justly refuse to own or receive your Letter. Secondly, you were a person under admonishing, and had refused to hear the Churches Messengers, therefore we had no warrant to read nor hear your Letter. Thirdly, some of us understood

that your main design was to draw away some more to you, though the greatest part of the Church were fully satisfied about the falseness of your way, yet it may be, there were some weak, as there was in the Church of the *Romans*, and of the *Corinthians*, *Rom.* 14. 1. *1 Cor.* 8. 9. But as for your jeering at our weakness and febleness, and that we were afraid of being shaken, concluding that fear had surprised the Hypocrites, and that we were the wicked that could not stand in Judgment, &c. This is like *Rabshakeh* dealing with *Hezekiah* and the poor Jews, &c. as we told you before, but we acknowledg we are a poor, weak, and afflicted People, even the poor of the Flock whom the Lord hath yet preferred, &c. You likewise jeer at our Fasting day, which in other words you did to a Member of the Congregation, saying to this effect, What could they not open a Letter, but they must pray to their God, and now they have prayed will not their God hear them? as another of your company also jeering at our prayers, used these words, *1 Kings* 18. 26. *O Baal hear us*, &c. But the truth is we did keep many Fasting daies after you left us, and we can say, through grace, that God did not shut his ear against our prayers, for not one Soul went from us after we did so: As for your reviling and reproaching that godly man, our Brother *Simpson* by name, it may be when your Pamphlet comes into a far Country, where neither he nor you are known, some may believe what you write, but in *Bristol*, or any other place where he and you are well known, your tongue will prove no slander; for his humility, integrity, and godliness, is better known than to be darkned by your pen, but we shall leave him to clear his own innocency: As for your Epistle to the Churches and Elders in *England* and *Wales*, and particularly to those in *Essex* and *Norfolk*, we shall leave that to them, either to make their Appeals to the Lord, or their Answer to you.

This passage
concerning
R. Simpson
was inserted
by some of us
without his
knowledge.

As for what you observed in eminent Church-Members, and other high Pretenders to Religion, (as you say) while you sat in Parliament, and other chief places of Council and trust in the Nation, we shall say nothing to that, only this we do remember, and did observe in what a height of dif-

discontent you came home, and continued one while crying out against the priests, and false Prophets, another while against Hypocrites, and sometimes concluding and saying, that al the Religion then profest in *England* was nought, and that we must find out a new Religion, at which some of us were silent, as not knowing what you had seen and observed where you had been, though some of us did reply, as we doubt not but you doe remember; but in this posture you continued till a new Religion came, which you presently within few daies or weeks embraced, without so much as setting apart one hour with the Church to enquire of the Lord, what was in the bottom of that new Religion, but rather threatening of us, that if we did not speedily come away and embrace it we were all lost, though you could not tell us of any thing we should come unto.

We come now to your chief Letter wherein you betray us again with a kiss, calling us friends, &c. As for your Preface, wherein you first disown any power that we have over you, &c. we shall not dispute that, but resolve to do our duty according to Scripture rule, *Mat. 18. Tit. 3. 10, 11.* and shall leave the issue to him in whose hands are the hearts of all men.

Secondly, as for your pretended faithfulness, but most unparallel'd impudency, and sensoriousness, in judging us to be no Church of Christ, but a Synagogue of Satan, and a Cage of unclean and hateful Spirits, wherein lodgeth pride, hypocrisie, envy, slandering, back-biting, railing, lying, love to this present world, and conformity to the fashions, &c.

We confess this is a sad sentence, to cloath neer threescore persons with such a spotted garment, many of which are able to give a better account of the work of grace in their souls, and of their faith in Christ, and have a more blameless conversation, than ever we could hear of you, or observe in you; what secret seeds may be in the hearts of any among us we cannot say, neither durst we proudly boast as others do, but this we must profess ingeniously that we never observed so much of those evils before mentioned to break forth upon any of those that now are together, as we have

seen in you, and in some of these that are gone away with you, and we are perswaded there is no judicious Christian this day in *Bristol*, that hath known and observed you and us, but will say the same thing; so that there being so many such persons with your self gone from us, we hope there is some Reformation in the Church, but if there should still remain any such among us, (as we hope there doth not) surely we shall be ready to deal with them, as we have done with you and others, onely we must know they are such, for we must not take the railing accusations of our imbittered enemies for a sufficient proof.

Thirdly, you say, *notwithstanding there is that in some of us, after which your soul doth greatly long, that the salvation of God were come out of Sion, &c.* We do believe there is many a soul in this Congregation, that doth long and groan day and night after more of the blessed Spirit of Jesus Christ, that so they might know him better, believe on him more, love him more, and live more to him, and yet we trust there is never a soul in this Congregation, but seeth sufficient ground to stand at a distance from your Principles and waies; so that you may cease hoping for any of them to come unto you, the Lord preserving them by his grace.

We come now to the five things in your Admonishing, a Copy of which we having by us, do here insert *verbatim*.

First, your leaving the Church, which hath three sad consequences in it, as we judge: First, the drawing of many away from the faith and waies of the Gospel: Secondly, the offending, grieving and stumbling of many weak souls: Thirdly the opening of the mouths of many to speak evil of the waies of Truth, as *2 Pet. 2. 2.*

Secondly, your contemning of some, and neglecting of others of the Ordinances of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, your extream sensoriousness and rash judging, not only of persons abroad, but also of the Church, contrary to *Matt. 7. 1. Rom. 14. 3.* also your calling the Church an Harlot.

Fourthly, your asserting in the Church Doctrins contrary to Truth: As first, that we did not know what Faith was,

was, and that Faith was an eternal thing: Secondly, that Christ and Faith is all one: Thirdly, that Christ is not the object of Faith: Fourthly, your speaking reproachfully of the blessed Scriptures, affirming they were blind, and a plague to souls; and further saying, they are not the Word of God, nor the Rule of Life.

Now because you say these are studied Accusations, and from the Father of lies, &c. we shall therefore prove every tittle of these things to be true; First, that you have left the Church, is true, and that your so doing hath drawn away some, grieved others, and opened the mouthes of many to speak evil of the waies of Christ, this is clear and plain, and not a studied accusation, but a real thing, and that which hath been matter of grief and sadness to the Church, and therefore we did send to admonish you of the evil of it: Now in that you reply, *all judgment is given to the Son*, whom you say we are ignorant of, and enemies to, &c. and therefore what is our judgment worth, &c. and then you go on to heap up fourteen dreadful Sentences against us, such as the Spirit of God doth in Scripture give to Reprobates and cast awaies, and so conclude with that *2 Thes. 2. 8.* Now we desire any sober Christian to consider of this your Answer, (which you call your defence to our charge, of which you complain you had much wrong, because your Letter of defence was not read) whether this be a Christian-like answer to the Admonition of a Church, you not giving us herein one word or reason of your departing from us, but onely heaping up 16. or 18. dreadful Sentences against us.

The second thing you were admonished of, was your contemning of some, and neglecting of others of the Ordinances of Christ: First, that Ordinance which you condemn is Baptism in Water, which you utterly reject and cast away, neither using it to your Children, nor allowing it to Believers, but calling it as you have often done, that ugly thing of Baptism; with other bitter and violent expressions against it, to the grief of some of us: Now we did not send to admonish you for not practising of it, for we knew your judgment was against it; but to admonish you

you of your great sin, in speaking so contemptuously against it, calling some of them that practised it, ugly *Anabaptists*, as you have done in some of our hearing. Now whereas you call us hypocrites, &c. because as you say, we sent to admonish you for not practising Baptism by Water; you speak falsely and do us wrong, for we did not so, but onely for your contemning of it, which we shall leave to the Lord of Ordinances to judge. The second Ordinance which you neglect, is the Lords Supper, and such other Ordinances as are practised, and to be practised in the Churches of Christ; which that you do neglect is clear by your practise, &c. And whereas you demand whether we had medled in any such thing for some years past, and then fall a threatening of us again as hypocrites, with deceit and hypocrisie, &c. To which we answer, you speak false again, for the Church never neglected that Ordinance of the Lords Supper any years; it is true that through your means and some others, the Church did forbear the practise of it about a year together; but it is one thing for a Church upon occasion to forbear an Ordinance, and another thing totally to neglect it, or deny it as you do: but for your flying out as you do, in the first part of your Reply to this particular, against Inventions, Traditions, Imaginations of mens carnal wisdom, &c. We answer, we use no Ordinance but the Institutions of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he hath commanded to be observed in his Churches till his coming again; in the mean while all men may see, we had ground to admonish you for the contempt of some, and neglect of other of the Ordinances of Christ; so that this is no lie, nor studied accusation as you call it: and whereas you say in the close of this Reply, that Baptism and the Lords Supper you own; Oh! how durst you to publish such equivocation to the World, when in your conscience you know, you own neither of those two Ordinances, neither Baptism by Water, nor Breaking of Bread; why then do you use such mental reservations? deal plainly that men may know what you are, did you not say in the words preceeding, that God requires truth in the inward parts, and then presently write an abominable untruth? is there any fear of God before your eyes? &c.

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The third branch of your Admonition is, for your extreme sensoriousness and rash judging; not onlie of persons abroad, but also of the Church, calling it a Harlot, the truth of which sensoriousness, the whole Church can testifie, yea we could give many particular instances were it necessary: but what need we go further than your present Letter, where, in your Reply to this third particular, you call the Church a Harlot, &c. and page 20. where you, rehearsing what you had said amongst us before you left us, confess that you did at last say, our Church was but a Harlot; and yet now you say this charge is false, and from the Father of lies; and that the Church of Christ you do own dearly, &c. Now here you come in again with your mental reservation, saying you did not call the Church of Christ so, but the People in *Bristol*, which you say is a Harlot; now is this honesty or any thing else but deceit and hypocrisie: did not we send to admonish you, for calling this Church in *Bristol* a Harlot, which you confess you did, and yet you say this charge is false, and from the Father of lies; we wonder who is your Father in this thing, and what appears in you but meer deceit and subtilty, equivocation, and mental reservation; O! for shame lay aside these unchristian practises; and here we desire all Christians to consider, whether this were a studied and false accusation, as you say.

The fourth branch of your Admonition is, your asserting in the Church Doctrins contrary to truth, three of which are mentioned, many more might have been, &c. First, you asserted at a Meeting in your own house, that as Christ was the great light of the World; so he was the great Faith of the World; and that Christ and Faith was all one, and that Christ was not the object of Faith: Our question was not about the oneness or nearness that there is between Christ and Faith; but whether the person of Christ, and the grace of Faith were not to be distinguished; and whether Jesus Christ in his person, as God-Man, be not the object of Faith, as him whom man is to believe in for Salvation: Your assertion was, we did not know what Faith was, and that Faith was an eternal thing; alleging that

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Scripture, 2 Cor. 4. last. *But the things which are not seen are eternal.* This occasioned many Scriptures to be brought to prove that Christ and Faith were to be distinguished, and that Christ was the object of Faith; and though the word object be not used in Scripture in that sense, yet, we are often bid to look unto Christ for Salvation, as *Isa. 45. 22. Zach. 12. 10. Heb 12. 2.* which Scriptures were then alleged against what you asserted. Now in your Reply you allege *1 Tim. 1. 9* you say faith is a Mystery held in a pure conscience, hid from all ignorant and vulturous eyes, &c. in which Reply of yours, you shew your weakness, in abusing the words and sense of the Apostle, as any judicious Christian may perceive by comparing your Book with that Scripture, &c. but upon the matter you do now say as much as we did then admonish you of. And whereas you demand why we did not then question you, and that if it be for conscience sake, why had we not done it sooner, and why had we not disproved you by the Scripture, and why would we suffer things contrary to truth to be asserted among us without rebuke? &c. We answer, you were presently opposed and blamed for asserting such things, as you were at several other times for asserting such things, which in the 20 page of your Book, you call some manifestation of truth that was breaking forth in you some years past; at which some were offended, and contradicted it, &c. though for a solemn dealing with you, we did not, till you left the Church; which perhaps was our sin and your misery; but considering your spirit, and the state of the Church, we knew not how to set about it, though some saw ground enough to do it, &c.

The fifth branch of your Admonition, which was for speaking against the Scriptures, affirming they were blind, and a plague to souls, and that they were not the Word of God, nor the Rule of Life, &c.

For the first part of this branch, you did, at a Meeting again at your own house, affirm, which many took notice of, as well those that were not of the Church, as those that were, whereby the thing was publickly known in the Citie, and became a reproach to the Church; an eminent person

person of the Citie enquiring of one of us about it; and that you did speak these words, is as certain as ever you did speak word in your life, some of us sitting over against you, do well remember with what kind of passion you spake it, clapping your hand upon the Book or Table, saying, that that Book or Scripture, was one of the greatest blinde and plagues to mens souls this day in *England*; and these words became a reproach to the Church, upon which we did admonish you; and though now in your Book, you say that this charge is utterly false, and from the Father of lies, and invented by his instruments; yet we do again affirm, and will set our hands to it, that you did speak these very words.

Secondly, for that expression, that the Scriptures are not the Word of God, &c. did not you, at the red Lodg in the Garde-nhouse, before near twenty people, say so? when one of us being by, bid you for shame not to speak so; it is true, you did at a Meeting a little before you left us, propose it to consideration, as a thing wherein we had been mistaken; yet so, as your very proposing of it, did imply the negative: other instances also we could give at private conferences that some of us had with you about the same thing; but what need we say more, do you not demand in your Book, *page 19.* where doth the Scripture call it self the Word of God? to which we answer, we shall give you four plain places instead of many, *Jer. 30. 2, 4. Rev. 17. 17. Prov. 30. 5. Mark 7. 8, 9, 13.* But what should we go to light a candle to the Sun? have not many judicious and godly Writers long ago proved against former Athiests and Hereticks, that the Scripture is the Word of God; though neither they nor we deny, that glorious Title, that God the Father hath put upon the person of Jesus Christ, that his *Name should be called the Word of God, Rev. 19. 13.*

And thirdly, whereas you demand, to whom was the Scripture, the Rule of Life? We answer, to all the People of God to whom they were given, *Deut. 4. 8. and 5. 31, 32. Mat. 5. 6, 7. chap. Rom. 12.* All which containeth Rules and Directions for Christians to walk by; but it is

the character of wicked men, that they cast the Law of God behind their backs.

And thus we have proved every tittle you are charged with in your Admonition, to be true and clear, so that we are no liars, nor false accusers; but we must turn that back again upon your self, professing to all the World, that you have wronged us in what you have written against us.

As for the other part of your Letter, wherein you sometimes flatter your self, and commend your self, about your righteousness, faithfulness, diligence and deserving; as likewise how freely you had served us, and been a keeper of our Vineyard, and that now it is time to look to your own Vineyard, and to mind your eternal habitation, &c. We answer first, as *Prov. 27. 2. Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth, a stranger and not thine own lips*: But we never did blame you, nor admonish you, for any good you did among us, but for your departing from that which was good; *Jeſhu* was not blamed for the good he did, but because he took no heed to walk in the Law of the Lord God of *Israel* with all his heart; neither was *Amaziah* blamed for any good he did, but because he did it not with a perfect or upright heart; and as for your gift of discerning, &c. most of us know it was a thing you did much pretend to, and boast of, &c. though we could observe your gross mistake therein, &c. And for your now looking to your own Vineyard, and minding your eternal habitation, &c. truly we hoped you had done that when you were among us, and that your care and diligence which now you speak of, had been as well about your own soul as others: but if it were not, we wish you may make better use of your present time, than you have done of that which is past: As for any manifestations of truth breaking forth in you as you say, *page 26*, at which some of our hearts burned, and others were offended, &c. We know not any one Truth, that ever you spake in the Church, but it was readily assented to, and seconded by those that sat by; whether you did press to believing or holy walking; but for other things which were not according to Scripture, nor did not tend to faith or holiness, &c. some of us did sometimes manifest

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our dissent from you; yet with all tenderness, as knowing your spirit, and the spirits of some others now with you, we were not willing to offend you or them. And as for that which you so often asserted in the Church, and now mention page 20, 21. That you did not know Christ, and that that knowledge we had of him should profit us nothing, and that our habitation is in deceit, and through it we refuse to know the Lord, &c. First, we did not violently oppose you in that thing, as thinking that it arose from a sight and sense of the want of the Spirit of Christ, to open and reveal the glory of his person, virtues, Offices, and Mysteries, more clearly unto you, according to what is written, *Ephes. 1. 17, 18. Col. 2. 2. John 16. 14, 15.* and herein we could and did joyn with you in complaining of the littleness or smallness of our knowledge of Christ; yet some of us did often tell you, that our comfort stood not so much in a speculative knowing, as in a believing acknowledgment of Christ, to be that which he is said to be in the Scriptures, and so to own him, believe on him, love him, and obey him; and therefore we did then, and have since, and do now declare, that we owned no other Christ, but that one anointed glorious person, who was born of the Virgin, and who is made both Lord and Christ, who died, rose, and ascended, and is now sitting at the right hand of God, and is the Mediator, between God and man. who shall one day come again, according to the Scriptures.

Secondly, we do own no other knowing of Christ, but that which is according to the Scripture, namely, understandingly, to know him in his person without us, and experimentally to know him in his Virtues, or by his Spirit within us; and so through grace we do know him in our measure, and are waiting and praying daily for a further and clearer knowledge of him in his Virtues, and powers, by the revelation of his glorious Spirit, according to the Scripture; in the mean time we desire to acknowledge him, believe on him, love and reverence him as our Lord and King, and do submit to his Laws and Commands left in his Word: but we did little think, that your meaning

had been as now you declare, both in your Book, and by your practice, that you and we should take up that kind of notion of Christ, as to call that light that is in every man, both Heathens and others, *Christ*, and so to slight and nullifie that glorious person now in heaven, from being the object of Faith, &c. as many of your way do and have done to some of our faces, scoffing and jeering at us for speaking of the person of Christ, and for thinking to be saved by the blood of him that died at *Jerusalem*, and as you your self did jeeringly ask one of this Congregation, to this effect; whether we did believe Christ to be an old man, sitting in a chair in heaven? &c. You further tell us, *page 21.* That many who desired to see Christs first Appearance in the flesh, became his betrayers and murderers; so now in his second Appearances in life, power, and spirit, would be found the greatest enemies to him, and that some of us would betray him; and then appeal to all that have any discerning to judge, how sadly this is already fulfilled in us, &c. We grant that many did stumble at Christ when he came in the flesh, and that many in all ages have stumbled at the truth, and waies of Christ, as likewise many do now at his person, his Gospel, his waies, and his Ordinances, &c. which might put you to consider two things: First, whether you be not one that do so; and secondly, whether you be not one that have caused many to do so? &c. But you seem to beg the question, and take it for granted, that Christ is now come in life, power, and spirit, in you and your party; but truly you must give better demonstrations of it, before we or any other judicious Christians will believe you; for we have read much, and know something by experience through grace, what the sweet, gentle, & dove-like spirit of Christ is, & we have seen and known by sad experience, how unlike your spirit is to that: Secondly, how can you call this a murdering and betraying of Christ, namely our sending brethren three times in love and pitie to enquire after and admonish you and the rest that departed from us? we shall leave this to the Lord to determine, &c. As for those strange and unchristian expressions, *page 21.* of our sporting our selves, and

and making a wide mouth, and drawing out the tongue and the band against you, &c. and then calling us children of transgression, a seed of falshood, comparing of us to *Ishmael* and *Cain*; &c. We shall say little to it, onely desire the Lord to rebuke your railing; yea, we say again, the Lord rebuke your railing. Have we done any thing to you or against you, more than sent three Brethren, (after many prayers made) for to seek to recover your soul. And as for our imagining a vain thing, and setting our selves, and taking counsel against the annointed one, (as you say) as likewise our joining in confederacy with the enemies of God, and that we must be broken to pieces, for the Lord of Hostes is with you, and the shout of a King is among you, &c. We see it is an easie thing, for a man that hath brain-knowledge in the Letter of the Scriptures, to heap up a multitude of good words, right or wrong: but whether we or you have set against the annointed one, whether we or you shall be broken in pieces, we shall humbly leave to the Lord of Hostes, and King of Israel to determine, but we deny that the shout of the true King is among you, though some of your way have shouted and cried, *Hosanna, holy, holy, King of Israel*, to *James Naylor*; and if you mean that King as they called him, &c. we desire with humilitie, to shout and rejoyce: First, that God hath through the riches of his grace preserved us from those strong delusions, that you and others are fallen under. Secondly, that the Lord hath so wonderfully discovered, the abominable wickedness of those proud boasters and blasphemers, who called themselves Apostles, and were owned by you as infallible; & that God should do it in this Citie, even in the very faces of you, that you might see it & be ashamed, &c.

You make mention in the 22. page, of some of us beating in our Meetings, like the enemies of Christ in their Synagogue, &c. Now as we cannot but wonder at your shamelesnes in printing such a thing; so we cannot but declare to all the world the truth of it is story. You know it hath been the practice of the Women of this Congregation for some years past, (especially since the Apostacy of you and others from us) every second day of the week, towards

towards evening, to seek the Lord by supplication and prayer by themselves; at which Satan hath much rag'd, and some of your way have come several times to disturb them, and in particular upon the day you mention, there came two Women, one of which had been an old *Ranter*, but now fallen into your way, the other a late Member of this Church, but now turned to your opinion; these two wretched Women came rushing into the room, (one of our Sisters being then in prayer) and so did in a most unchristian, uncivil, and inhumane manner, walk up and down the room, humming and making a loud voice, at length came to the Woman that was in prayer, and putting their mouth to her ear, uttered these words, *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*; and so forced her to give over praying, whereupon after many civil intreaties by some, to cause them to depart, and to leave off telling them, that there was no place for them unless they would be quiet; but this not prevailing, one of the company, an ancient godly Woman, took one of them by the arm, and would have put her forth at the door, but could not, she being too strong for her; which striving together, is that which you call a beating, and so at length the Woman of the house, claiming her privilege, did command them to depart; and this was all the beating and occasion of it, &c.

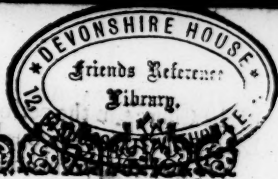
Now let all the world see the wretched wickedness of these two women which you justify: Secondly weakness, and shallowness of your foundation upon which you build your large Discourse of 11 or 12 lines together where you heap up many dreadfull expressions against this Church for this act, calling it a beating like the enemies of Christ in the Synagogue; whereas there was but 5 or 6 women there: now is not this to justify the wicked and condemn the righteous both of which are an abomination to the Lord? as *Prov. 17. 15.* what more wicked act could there be than for these two wretched women to come humming, ranting, and roaring into the room, to disturb a company of poor Christians when they were seriously pouring forth their Soules to God in prayer? &c. You desire us page 22. to read without prejudice or deceit the

83 *Psalms* from end to end, and see whether our practise and portion be not contained in it &c. We do conclude that if you were to be our judg, the things written therein should be our portion: but blessed be the Lord our sentence shall come forth from him who will with righteousness judg the poor & with equity reprove for the meek of the earth &c. but O poor deceived man, how can you apply the things written in that *Psalms* to us, or that in *Obediah*, from verse the 11, to the 15. as you do? What gross darkness hath seized upon your mind, that you should be crying out against us, and threatening of us, for that which we through grace, are innocent of, and you your self so notoriously found to practise, for are not you joined with all the *Pa-pists*, *Athiests*, *Ranters*, and ungodly rabble of the world, in this one great design of the Devil, to break in pieces the Churches of Christ in *England*? Hath it not been the attempt of one power and party after another, to rout, break, and scatter the Congregations in *England*, under the name of *Independents*, *Anabaptists*, *Sectaries*, and *Schismatics*? &c. And hath any party gone so far in this wicked practise, as you and your company, that call themselves *Quakers* have done? Nay, was there ever any partie in *England*, or the Nations adjacent, that have offered the like violence to the Lord Jesus Christ, in his person, in his Word, in his Gospel, his Ordinances, his Saints, his waies, &c. as you and your partie have done? And what have those poor sheep done? have we, (or have not you rather) joined with the Persecutors of the waies, and people of God at this day? poor man! where are your eyes? are not you joined in practise with the most embittered spirits in *England* against the people of God, whom you and others make the objects of your scorn? Nay, do not *Athiests*, *Drunkards*, and prophane persons, cry *Aha*, at the reading of your Book? Have you not pierced the sides and hearts of Christs wounded ones, and will not this be bitterness in the later end? Nay, have you not out-stripped all others in lies and falsehoods, slanders and reproaches, scoffs, scorn, and derisions, which in your Book you have unjustly cast upon us, teaching the wicked of the world,

world, yea, even the children that have no understanding, how to blaspheme, and call the Churches and Servants of Christ, the skirts of the Whore, Synagogues of Satan, and cages of unclean birds? have you not made our Saviour to stink in the nostrils of all the Nation, at the least of so many as do not know you and us, but will credit your untruths, &c. O! stand still, smite upon your thigh, & blush for shame at what you have done. Suppose the things had been true, which the Lord knows they are not true, which you lay to our charge, was it not the part of wicked *Ham*, to proclaim his Fathers nakedness? but as you say to us, so say we now unto you; what should we advise; we perceive your heart is hardened and you will not hear? O! that we could mourn for you! your last clause in your Letter is, That from henceforth we should not trouble you or our selves by word or writing; when we have performed the last Ordinance that Christ hath left for persons in your condition, unless God give you a new heart, which we should be glad to hear of, we shall not trouble you: And so to close up what at present we shall say to you; take notice, that whereas you lay blame upon our Brethren, whom we sent to admonish you, of whose faithfulness we doubt not in discharging their trusts to you and the rest; we do desire them to answer for themselves, that their faithfulness may appear as visibly as your folly.

*Signed in the Name and by the
consent and appointment of the
whole Church, by us,*

<i>Robert Purnel,</i>	<i>Thomas Ewen,</i>
<i>John Andrews,</i>	<i>Richard Moon,</i>
<i>Robert Simpson,</i>	<i>Brian Hanson.</i>



A Reply of the three Messengers
of the Church, to an untrue
Charge or Report of *Dennis
Hollister*, in a little Pamphlet
called,

The Skirts of the Whore discovered.

Dennis Hollister,

BEfore we make our defence to your passionate, heady, untrue report of us, we shall set down in order the Churches order, & our commission from God by them, to admonish your self and many others in your case, *Viz.* The Church taking into consideration, the great dishonor brought to the Name of God, the publick scandals and reproches cast upon the wayes of Jesus Christ, to the wounding and piercing of him afresh, and to the grieving of the hearts of many pretious Saints, stumbling the weak, and opening the mouthes of the adversaries.

We the whole Church, do again the second time, according to the Scripture rule, *Mat. 18. 15* to the *26. Tit. 3. 10*, &c. in the name of the Lord *Jesus* our Saviour, and in tender bowels of pittie, and love to your souls, beseech, admonish and warn you to repent of your sins, and refrain from your evil wayes, and to return to the truth, faith, and wayes of the Lord *Jesus Christ* recorded in the Gospel, that if it be possible, the glory of God may be recovered, reproches, scandals and stumbling-blocks removed, our souls refreshed, and your soul eternally saved, which is the desire and end

of the Church, in the performance of this their duty to the Lord, and service to your souls.

We do also appoint and desire three of our brethren, *viz.* *Robert Simpson, Richard Moon, Robert Parnel*, to admonish them, to whom we shall give the particular things to admonish each person of, &c.

We the three Messengers of the Church above named, having knowledge of the Churches order, and having received our Commission from God by them as to this work, We three only met together, and considered seriously of the particulars that we were to admonish our back-slidden brethren and sisters of. Most of which we knowing our selves they were guilty of, and for those things we knew not our selves, we were fully satisfied by the mouthes of many faithful true witnesses, that were eye and ear-witnesses to the rest; so we being fully satisfied in every particular, we did in the name of the Lord, and in obedience to his command, in a filiall fear to God, love and pitie to your souls, admonish one after another as we had opportunity, &c.

Now *Dennis Hollister*, you have falsly accused us in your pamphlet, *pag. 3.* in saying we charged you with false accusations, and as soon as we had done, fled away as men surprized with fear, or accused by their own consciences, &c.

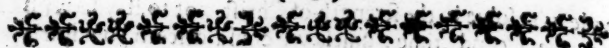
For the first of these, that the things we charged you withall are true in every syllable of it, doth at large appear in the fore-going answer of the whole Church: and for the second, whereas you say, as soon as we had done, that we fled away as men surprized with fear, or accused by our own consciences, &c. this is as false as the rest; for through grace we did not fear you, neither did our consciences accuse, but excuse us in what we did, as being then, and still are, fully satisfied we had done that which was our duty; Now if you will know the reason why we did not stay with you after we had done our work with you, then let us tell you that you may remember when we were sent by the Church with the first admonition, some of us staid with you above an hour, and found your spirit in such an ill frame even as a boyling Furnace boyling over, and scalding all that stand near it; this
made

made us resolve in the strength of Christ, not to stay so with you the second time, unless we could discern your spirit to be in a better frame: but as soon as we perceived you not to hear the Messengers of the Church, but in stead thereof we discerned some violent headiness breaking forth, as before, &c. So we left you as one not in a capacity for Christians to converse withall. Much more we might say, but we judge your tongue or pen can be no slander to us, as to any serious Christians, our stability as to all substanciall principles of religion, being as well known as your mutability. We subscribe this with our hands.

Robert Simpson,

Richard Moon,

Robert Fernel.



Prov. 18. 17. *He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.*

Verf. 19. *A Brother offended is harder to be won than a strong Citty, and their contentions are like the Bars of a Castle.*

Jude 22. *And of some have compassion making a difference.*

23. *And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted with the flesh.*

A true Answer of Robert Simpson to a Pamphlet lately put forth by Dennis Hollister, intitled, *The Skirts of the Whore discovered.*

Mar. 5. 38.
to the end.

Luke 6. 27,
28, 29.

Rom. 12. 17.
to 22.

Heb. 12. 15.

I Intend by the grace of God to forbear giving like for like, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, reproach for reproach, through the infinite abounding grace of God extended to me by Christ, in some measure I have learned otherwise.

And your censorious bitter language, and judging without, nay against the Rule which God hath set as bounds for us not to pass over; in which judgments of yours you climb up as high as the Temple of God, I shall say little, or but small, to you about, but in reference to that seriously consider these places, 2 *Thes.* 2. 1 to 13. *Rom.* 14. 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. The Lord give you to see your wickedness in your bitter censorious spirit, which sure is not small, though you seem not to discern it, but cover it with a covering that is not of Gods Spirit, and so add sin to sin, and the good Lord give you repentance for it, you have not hurt or injured me at all by it, though your self you do; God hath of his infinite goodness, made your hard false speeches, and censorious

Ezek. 16. 1, 2,
Mai. 30. 1.

serious judgments of me, of good use to me, though no thanks at all to you for it nor any thing but what is laid to think on can you reap from it.

As I have said to you sometimes upon the like occasion, when you affirmed unto me that some men, to wit, such as then you had in admiration, though for that in which they exceeded, or God owns above others, I never saw nor yet heard, but this you affirmed to me concerning them, that when they were in the light, they could see what mens inward states was before God; some of which as you said, they saw you named to me, though such as they never saw, nor yet heard of any thing visibly apparently evil by them; by which man, by the blessed Rule of the Scriptures of truth, is to judge: otherwise our rule is to judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God.

My answer then to you in that affirmation concerning them, was this in words, or to the same effect; that as I could give no credence to such assertions groundedly, but contrarily had more than ground of jealousy to be suspicious they were delusions, as all such things and pretended revelations be, which have not the Law and the Testimony to warrant them: So what if all the men in the world, did approve me, what is that in order to certain ground of holding up my head before God in reference to it? So, if all did disapprove me, yet upon, & from such a ground, as that I have a sure word, & certain witness of Gods approving of me, I should not flagg in my Spirit, nor hang down in reference to that. That use (besides others) as to my self I have endeavoured to make of those great charges you lay upon me; and if your considerations were otherwise of me, as sometimes it hath been, and also of others, I would not in the least heed or give any regard to it, so as to flesh my self from it, *Phil. 3.3.*

The charges indeed that you lay upon me, and send me clothed with before the world, if so indeed, how sad were my condition; well might my countenance be changed, and

Matth. 7. 16.

19. 20.

1 Cor. 4. 5.

Deut. 29. 22.

Isa. 8. 20.

1 Cor. 4. 4.

Job 10. 15.

2 Cor. 10.

17. 18.

2 Cor. 5. 9.

Phil. 3. 3.

my thoughts be troublesome unto me, and the joynts of my loyns belosed, and my knees smite one against another, as if I did inhabit deceit, and devise wicked imaginations, and speak lies to you, and that in the name of the Lord, and the like. Soe charges they be, wickedness of the highest degree, and of the dangerousest attendance that can be.

Rom. 8. 33;

34.

Mal. 3. 3, 4, 5.

Job 34. 29.

To wit, your
own private
spirit and
consideration,
2 Pet. 1. 20,
21.

But truly it is sufficient to me, that under all the charges you load me with, that I have alwayes a witness in heaven, and brought into my own heart from thence, and confirmed unto me by the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son, by which I am cleared of your charges, and so by that means they take no hold upon me, God gives me much ease under all your clamors. Truly, it is a very small matter to me to be judged of you, (I say of you) who are more than apt to judge all, both persons and things, to be light, that bears no weight in your Ballance.

John 12. 48.

By which Ballance I know you must not your self be weighed at the great day and appearing of the Lord *Iesus*: but by that Ballance or Rule, that who ever walk according to it, peace and mercy shall be upon them; the Word that Christ hath spoken must judge all at that day.

Rev. 12. 10.

Luke 3. 14.

Mat. 12. 43, 44

But truly *Dennis Hollister* I pitie thee, methinks I could even mourn over thee in the consideration of thy being in the Divels work and imployment, to wit, an accuser of the brethren, as I am sure thou art in thy printed Papers.

And for that false charge (as it is altogether) of my speaking lies to you in the name of the Lord.

Mat. 28. 18.

Mat. 18. 16,

17, 18.

That charge of yours, I know, hath reference to my being (as you slightly say) the mouth of three Messengers sent to you by the Church to admonish you of your sins, (which sins of yours I am sure was obvious, visible and clear.) Truly in order to that, I knew well what I spake, when I spake on that rate I did unto you. I with my brethren that came with me, had a Warrant sealed and given forth to us from him who hath all power given unto him in Heaven and Earth, for what we did. And if I may speak it without boasting, as I trust I do, so we did attempt it, as those that God had vouchsafed that grace unto,

unto, to take up into the Mount with him, to confer with his Majesty by Christ about it, before we did dare to attempt upon it, his Majesty being pleased graciously to incline our hearts in some measure of holy reverence, feare and trembling, and in faith to wait upon his Majesty by Christ our Mediator and Intercessor, and we had a gracious answer from him by Christ, to our very hearts about it. And so we are strengthened to that work of the Lord, which otherwise we had rather any had been sent about than we. And then we went not staggering-ly, nor yet ignorantly, but knowingly and understanding-ly about it, God having in some measure fitted us for it, and left us not without some sure witness, that he was with us in it.

Exod. 3. 11.
Jer 6. 7, 8, 9,

And not any reluctancie have I or my brethren had for what we did; but are fully satisfied that what ever was set upon you, and laid at your door as your sin, to a little is true, and will be so found when the Lord shall lay Judgment to the Line, and Righteousnesse to the Plumbet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

Isai. 28. 17.

And whereas you say in the first line of your Letter to me, that it came upon you in soberness to manifest to my conscience, a little of the deceit in which as you say I inhabit.

That it came upon you to write to me; that is not questioned, but did it indeed come upon you in soberness, look back, recall your self, it's possible you may be mistaken, is it not?

Je. 17. 9, 10.
1 Tim. 1. 4, 5,
6, 7.
1 Tim. 4. 7.
2 Tim. 2. 16,
17, 23.

The occasion of your writing of it (which I would here relate, but that then I should be too tedious as well as be of little use to the Reader as all such Discourses usually be) the tumult and heat which you gave a clear manifestation of but a little before you writ and sent it, may give, I say, at least a reall ground of jealousy, that it came not from a Spirit in a sober frame at that time.

And sure when you are come to your selfe, as I may say,

say,

say, into a sober mind, you will not say it came upon you in soberness to write what you did, and when you did write; sure were you not in that altogether a stranger at home, you would charge upon your self passionateness, even this, that the occasion of your writing of that, and most, if not all that you writ and sent abroad concerning others, came from a fire indeed kindled in you, but not from a Cole from off the Altar, but from a violent heat of wild fire that came upon you, and was then in you, by which you were hurried, and in that hurry you writ and sent it.

Jam. 1. 17.

Jam. 3. 17, 18,

13, 14, 15.

Gal. 5, 22, 23.

Sure that soberness that is put into the heart by God, which is one of those good and perfect gifts, that cometh from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, is just as that Wisdom is which cometh down from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, easie to be intreated, gentle, full of mercy and good works, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

1 Sam. 15. 13,

14.

Phil 4. 5.

If that soberness you speake of were of that nature, or had that stamp upon it, how comes it to pass, that, that which you say came upon you in soberness to write, had so little (if any thing at all) of that Wisdom that is from above in it. That moderation that the Apostle exhorts Saints to make known to all men, nothing at all is of that in your printed paper, clearly manifests to any indifferent, sober, unbiassed man; but most (if not all of it) otherwise.

And sure that which you say came upon you in soberness to manifest, had little of any thing at all of that Wisdom that is from above, which in order to the same is first pure, but indeed that which is poynt blank contrary to purity of hearts, to true speaking, was it stult withall. And so I come to speak and give a true Answer.

I desire with that which is reall soberness indeed, to the main thing in your Letter to me, in reference to which you so sport your selfe, and insult over me as a Liar, and so present me before all, as one that shall have his part

part in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Rev. 22. 15.
Rev. 21. 7, 8.

Whereas indeed not any thing at all was a lye in what I asserted, but what I said you had my Hand unto; as my particular affirmation, that I say still, and that groundedly and truly you cannot manifest, much less have you any ground at all to lay that upon me which makes a lye, or any other sin, out of measure sinful, in order to the aggravations of it, (to wit) that it was a Lie invented, a Lie prosecuted, a Lie denied, and a Lie proved upon me; which words you say to me in the printed letter to me: Sure you were not in a sober mind when you said so, I am sure of that, but a great distance from it and true speaking.

And I cannot but think if you did indeed commune with your own heart, that light that is in you, and is in all men, if not put out, it would tell you so, and that it is a very slender proof that you have of it.

I could wish that in plainness and singleness of heart you had put out that Letter you have under my hand from end to end, as you did the Letter you sent to me, but that is forborn by you, for what end you best know: but had it so been, I know you had not gained any thing at all by it, to be a proof of what you would charge upon me. Had you in *Simplicity*, and *godly honesty* with it, declared how you came by it, and upon what account it was given unto you, which for satisfaction to the Reader, I shall truly relate.

You know that after I, with my brethren, had endeavoured to set your sins upon you, and to admonish you for them: afterwards I meeting with you, or rather as I think, you calling of me in to spe k with you as I went by your shop, you desired of me a Copie of the Churches charge of sin, that I with my brethren did admonish you for, from the Church; (which, said you to me, I know you have a Copie of) I was not free and forward to do it as you did well perceive; not as if I was unsatisfied of the warrantableness of the doing of it; I was satisfied, I might, though I told you

then, I could not do it as from the Church, I being but a single person : But that waywardness that was in me of giving you a copie of the Churches charge of your sins, sprang from some jealousies that I had, that you would but *game* your self with it, because of that fierce violent spirit that was manifested from you against your Reprovers, and that obdurateness that lay upon you.

Yet with your more than once or twice perswading of me with importunity and intreaty, I did engage my self to you to write out a copie, of what the Church by us did charge as sin upon you ; which I did truly, and deliver to you : and yet it was both promised and delivered to you, with this engagement, and actuall promise on your part, which I bound you to that you should not make use of it, for the making of that breach wider, that the wicked one by his Instruments had made here, I at that time saying these words to you, or to that effect, *I am sure that I would be loath to be found a setter up of partition walls, I had rather God would make all his people diligent, mindfull and carefull, of minding the things that make for peace, and by which we might edifie one another.* Which you gave me a promise of ; how clearly and fully you have broken your promise and personall engagement, you cannot be ignorant, unless wilfully ignorant.

So according to my promise to you, to which I was made more forward then else I should have been by your solemn promise,, I brought you a true copie of the charge of the whole Church of your sin, not any one of them but did agree in it, and did also agree to send us with it ; but the copie that I brought you, I did not bring it signed then with my hand at it, for indeed I was jealous of your spirit, notwithstanding your promise, who will wring and scrow out of words that which they speak not, and which those that speak them, intend not.

Which was the cause I had not then set my hand to it : but you looking at it, and seeing my hand was not then to it, you intreated me to set my hand to it, that it was a true Copie of the Churches Charge of those sins,
for

for which I, with my brethren from them, did admonish you, I not considering what end you had in it; which was, it appears, to make me a transgressor before all: in that your own conscience cannot but tell you I was clear, you tending me a pen with ink in your shop, with the Copie I brought to you, I set my hand to it.

And what did I set my hand to? you know, speak truth, deal plainly and singly, do not evade and equivocate, though too much you have of that in your printed paper, in that you do profess you own Baptism and the Lords Supper, or breaking of Bread, as Institutions and Ordinances of Christ, whilst it is visible to all that have eyes, that in your owning of them you give no answer at all to those that upon good grounds question you about them (just so you deal with me) you know that what I set my hand to, was that; that which I delivered to you, was a true Copie of the Churches Charge, and that is all that you have my hand to, in reference to which you make such a noyse all over, in order to which there is meerly by you the founding of brass, and the tinkling of the Cymball, onely the beating of the aire. But to wind up this troublesome discourse, as to me it is, in which I would have been altogether silent, if not, drawn and put upon it by weighty considerations.

I shall propose this before you, take it and consider of it.

Say it be thus; That apparent injury and violence is offered to you in that which is near and dear unto you, say your nearest relations, or to your name and estate, which I conceive you would preserve and rescue to your power, by all lawfull means, from those forces that is put upon them, and injuries done to them, you being really satisfied with, out any the least scruple or question, that such violence and injury is done to them, though your self was not personally present and saw all done, though the most part of it you did; yet you being so clearly satisfied about that part you saw not, that the fact in every part of it, is as clear to you as the Sun at Noon day. Now if in this case of yours that

doth so nearly concern you: you should go, and from those from whom you could not have the least suspicion from, of speaking otherwise than right in every Tittle.

Deut. 17. 6.

Deut. 19. 15.

Mat. 18. 16.

And from those from whom you are so fully satisfied, besides the testimony of many standers by, about two or three Witnesses by which the matter is established.

I say, in this case should you go in a sober and Christian way, and tell such as have done that injury, and put that violence upon you of it, and debate the matter with them, telling of them they were much out of the way; they were injurious in what they did, and the end of it without repentance, would be very sad and lamentable. Do you think that in this case fair & even dealing were measured out unto you, in case you should be rendred as a Lier all over the nation for it, because you did not see it every bit your self, though the most part of it you did; and what little part you did not, you had certain reall true testimonie of, nor to be questioned? I judge you would not.

This is the naked reall case I conceive between you and I, in reference to that for which you so foully fall upon me, and tell me for it in your printed paper, that I am without, and for the Lake, and have a proud look, and a lying tongue, and a heart that deviseth wicked imaginations; which indeed the Lord hates, and say I have uttered perverseness; and as the false witness shall not go unpunished. Whilst I spake nothing but what was true in every Tittle of it, and could not forbear to speak, but with the making of my self guilty of your sin, having that clear Call to speak it which I had, the most part of it being that, which to my grief I heard my self, and that which I did not hear, I was fully satisfied of by true, clear, and unquestionable proof. I would leave this to you to make application of, as in order to that, that yo write in your Letter concerning me.

Lev. 5. 1.

Lev. 19. 17.

But, sure I am, you did offer apparent violence and injury to that which should be nearer and dearer to us than our nearest relations, much more our names and estates.

I saw

I saw and heard it, almost all the particulars you were charged with; that which I did not hear, I wanted not satisfaction in.

Now being called to put to my hand with others, to see if I could be a means to recover you out of the snare of the Devil, and the pretious Institutions of Christ from those forces and violences that you offered to them: judg right; am I, think you, for this to be blamed? you do, it is true, but I pass not for it, if that make me vile, as to you it doth, I resolve to be more vile.

So that by what I have said as to your great charge against me, I stand clear, and never had you my hand in particular, to that which I said, I heard not, & you well know it your own self; though I said I was not there when you spake so reproachfully of the blessed Scriptures of Truth; yet I said I did believe it, and yet do; and you know you had not my hand to any thing but this, that, that which I deliverd to you at your request and solicitation, was a true copie of that the Church sent us to admonish you for; if it be not, prove that, and then I shall own the condemnation as just, that you lay upon me for being a Liar, which I knowingly know you cannot, and till that you say nothing at all in order to your great charge: but only quibble at words, catching to get some hold so of me, but cannot. Rom. 2. 1, 2, 3

Besides, it was some good space of time after you had that, you have my hand to, ere you did pick any quarrell with me about it, though if you had pleased you might have spoken with me everie day, I think, in my passing to and fro or at the least word of yours sent to me to desire it, and, I judge, I should not have denied it.

But I conceive you had not spoke when you did, but that you were heated by that fire that is sure from beneath, by my contesting against that held out by you, which I desire to war against by the Spirit and spirituall weapons, so long as I have any being, and not otherwise, as being fully satisfied that onely such a war, of that kind and nature, is to be maintained; the wrath of man and carnal weapons, not Rom. 6. 13;
2 Cor. 10. 4;
5, 6.

being

1 Thess 2.8. being appointed of God, and so not under a promise of
 2 Tim. 2.24. a blessing from him, to bring down and to naught such
 25, 26. wickedness. And indeed I am clearly and in some measure
 1 Tim. 1. 18, satisfied by God, from that most sure word of prophesie,
 19. whereunto we do well to take heed, that one main cause
 1 Sam. 17. 45. why the Lambs Warriours and Souldiers gain no more
 47. 50. ground than they do against the Lambs and their enemies
 Rev 12 7, 8, and opposers, both those enemies within, and those ene-
 9, 11. mies they combat withall without, is because such contests
 and combats with them, the war is so little maintained by
 the Spirit and spiritual weapons, which if it were, sure they
 would flie and fall before them.

And immediately after you have subscribed the Letter
 you sent me, in the third line of the next page you say con-
 cerning your Letter that you sent me, you have received
 no answer of me; this is true, but did I promise to send you
 an answer? If so, you might charge me home, which I
 know you would not spare: But I did not, neither indeed
 could you groundedly expect any answer from me of it, if
 in a sober mind: but yet that had been done, but that the
 bearer, by whom you sent the Letter to me, by some thing
 that he proposed to me, which had weight in it, did per-
 swademe not to meddle in such vain fruitless janglings, as
 to that effect some of his words was to me, by which I was
 detained from writing to you; and indeed his counsell in
 that was sound and favourie,

And whereas you mention that *Festus*, a Heathen Ro-
 man Governor, was so noble, that he heard *Pauls* defence,
 as to the accusation made against him by his own Countrey-
 men; and King *Agrippa* said, Thou art permitted to speak
 for thy self: but, say you, you are falsely accused, condem-
 ned and refused to make your defence.

First, I say, you are not falsely accused, condemned and
 refused to make your defence, that is but your own saying,
 it is a meer arie vapour.

Secondly, were you not desired, nay intreated to come
 and appear, and so if you had any thing to say, to speak
 and make your defence? Do you not wel know, that libertie

was never denied unto you? but what ground, I pray you, hath one in your case to expect the making his defence that way you would do, by a *Proces*, as I may say, with refusing to come face to face, as *Paul* did before *Agrippa* and *Festus*, that you know you were intreated and desired to do, and therefore in your naming of them in order to that you name them for, you speak nothing at all; you were permitted to do it as they were and might have done, as *Paul* did; and I hope that groundedly; an ever Rule, and another kind of dealing had you found than what *Paul* was tried by, or he found from them, though I know you are more than apt to conclude otherwise of all that is not of your stature; but I fear sense of guilt lay so open upon you; as that if you speak truth, that was it that kept you away from making your defence in that way, that was clear by that Rule, we are to go by in the managing of the things of Gods House, and so not any would have denied or excepted against you in a warrantable way, which you had free liberty to do; and then before your self, if not falling down under the sins charged upon you: all in every particular had been proved, so as that you could not justly have excepted against the Charge in no part of it; and I believe that would have been done by some of those, if not all, for whose sakes, as you say, you made that you sent, and was not read visibly.

So simple honest hearted they were, and so remain, as that they, to save you out of the snare of the Devil, would have in soberness of Spirit, in conscience of their duty to God, and in love to your soul, witnessed before you that which was charged upon you.

But I forget my self, now a true Answer you have of all that Letter which in particular you sent to me, with a small touch upon some thing, that in order to the not sending you an answer you speak to me after ward, I confess I have more words in my answer than I would or intended. But I could not tell how plainly to answer it so, as to satisfy the Reader in a briefer way.

It is probable a flood you will cast after me, but I pass not,

Isai. 43. 2.
1 Pet. 4. 19.
1 Pet. 2. 15.
Eccl. 3. 1. 16.
Psalm: 37. 33.

nor, such floods shall not drown me, nor such fire burn me; I resolve, in the strength of Christ, in the way of well-doing, to commit my self to him who in this I know will bring forth my righteousness as the light, and my judgement as the noon-day, and so to labour, by well-doing, to put you to silence in this, as not knowing any way otherwise better to do it. And for your self, I have, if my heart deceive me not, no coar at all against you; but could be glad I might be of any use unto you, and could rejoyce to see God recovering of you out of the snare of the Devil, by giving of you repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, the which I am sure you are departed from; which is the greans of your Friend, who is a lover of your Soul, though a Witness against your fallhood and deceit.

Robert Simpson.

A



A WORD to
DENNIS HOLLISTER
BY
THOMAS EWEN.

Dennis Hollister,

I Have of late met with a Book put forth by you, in which there is a Letter formerly written by you to me, which Letter I acknowledge I received above a year since; and having read it, I laid it by, intending never to have Answered you, *lest* (as Solomon saith, Prov. 26. 4.) *I also should be like unto you:* but now you having published it (with your folly) to the world, I take my self bound to Answer you, *lest* as (Prov. 26. 5.) *you should be wise in your own conceit, &c.*

In the second Branch of your Title page, you say, That I have before several witnesses often denied my self to be a Minister of the Gospel; in which you deal like your self, though not like a friend, nor like a Christian; but as for your ends in so publishing, I shall leave to him by whom Actions and Spirits are weighed, who will preserve the faithful, and plentifully reward the proud doer.

I shall therefore with all plainness, soberness, and faithfulness, declare (both unto your self, and also to the world) upon what grounds, and in what sense, I have sometimes denied to be called *Minister*, though I never denied my self a Preacher of the Gospel.

G

But

But the first ground upon which I denied the title of Minister, was this; When you wish, many others, as I shall farther shew, had prevailed with me to come to *Bristol*, I gave it under my Hand to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commissioners, That I should not come as a Parish Minister to take any Parochial Charge upon me, but rather as a Publike Preacher of the Gospel in the City, by way of Lecture, and so I have (sometimes by word, sometimes by writing, as I had occasion) denied my self to be a Minister of any Parish in *Bristol*; so that I never did, nor I hope never shall own my self a Minister of any Parish, &c. so that this is the first ground, and this you know in your Conscience to be true, and that I did it in tenderness of Conscience, though now you make it matter of reproach.

Secondly, I have sometimes (as it is like in your hearing, and some others) denied my self a Minister in Office, I having not then been Called, Constituted, or Ordained to any Office in any Church otherwise than by the unanimous Consent, Approbation, and Request of this Church of *Bristol*, to serve them in the Lord, as that other godly man who left the City at my coming hither had done before me, I alwayes distinguishing, between a Person sent forth to preach the Gospel to the World, and a Person Called, set apart, and Ordained to Office in a Church: whether this distinction were right or no, I shall not now dispute, but this was your judgement then, and therefore in this you deal unworthily in publishing this to the world, to my reproach, whereas you know in your Conscience, that I never denied my self to be a Preacher of the Gospel, nor a Minister, or Servant to this Church, but only that I was not a Minister by Office, at least by an actual, and solemn Ordination.

Thirdly, There is yet another ground (as the Lord only, who is the searcher of hearts knows) upon which I have often put off, that honour and dignity, when you and others have put that stile or title upon me, my heart hath secretly answered, What am I that I should be called
so,

so, I being a poor inconsiderable worm, the least in my father's house: which have often brought those words to my mind, *Amos 7. 14. I was no Prophet, neither the Son of a Prophet, &c.* and this did arise from the sense I had of the honour and dignity, weight and excellency of that high Calling, and the great unworthiness and unsuitness that I saw in my self of so glorious an employment, and this also I am perswaded you know in your Conscience, that I have often hinted unto you in private discourse, and when you have spoken of me, and to me, (more indeed than was fit for any wise man to speak to the face of any Christian) namely, what God had done in *Bristol* by me since I came hither, &c.

But that I have been, and am through the grace of Christ (though the unworthiest upon earth) yet a Preacher and publisher of the glorious Gospel, of the grace of God both in *Wales*, and now in *Bristol*, I have no need to seek a proof of you, nor of any other man; I having had

First, The approbation, and recommendation of a Church of judicious Saints in *London*, where I had been for some time a Member, and unto whom my Principles as to matters of Religion, my Gift as to the work of Preaching, and my manner of life was well known.

Secondly, I having been solemnly sent forth by a Church of Christ in *Wales*, with Prayer and Supplication, recommending me to the Work and Grace of God, appointing me to Preach the Gospel in *Wales*, where; though I was accompanied with manifold weaknesses and temptations, yet the Lord was pleased to give me some Seal of my Ministry, the lawfulness of which Call, and sending forth to my work of Preaching, I could sufficiently prove, both from Scripture, and from the practises of the Churches of Christ: but of that more hereafter.

Now I having continued Preaching in *Wales* about the space of three years, it came to pass that some Overtures were made by the people of this City for my coming hither, and your self, with a Minister then of this City, came as Messengers to treat with the Church of *Llanhachar*, in

Wales, to spare me to this place, which though at first they denied, yet the importunity of many here (and as some have said) the incessancy of Prayer prevailed, so that that Church did consent that I should come, and ordered that a Letter should be written to acquaint the City and Commissioners, That if they could prevail with me, I should come unto them, &c. Whereupon as you know there was two Letters sent unto me, the one from the City, signed by the then Major, some Aldermen, (one of which was then a Parliament man) with divers others of the Council, and Commissioners of the City of *Bristol*, your self being then one: Some of the words of which Letter I shall here insert, &c.

We being met together to consider and advise of able and godly men to Preach the Gospel in Bristol, and having experience, and much assurance of your faithfulness, and sufficiency for that Work, do desire you, Sir, that you will please to come unto us: And they adding farther, their care of my maintenance, &c.

Another large Letter I then received from divers godly people, the inhabitants of the City, some of which words I shall also here-insert,

Dearly beloved, since after much waiting upon the Lord, the hearts of the People, generally throughout the City, is so much set upon you, desiring to enjoy you in the service of the Gospel, &c. And since our Motion formerly made by our Messengers, hath been so much prospered by the Lord in the hearts of our Brethren there, &c. We do therefore earnestly and very seriously beseech you in the Name of our Lord Jesus, that you will with all convenient speed come to Bristol and help us, &c.

Upon the receipt of which two Letters, and some advise had with godly friends, I resolved in the strength and garce of Christ, That I would come, though I had much fear and trembling in my own heart, from the apprehension I had of the greatness of the Work of Christ in *Bristol*, and the insufficiency I saw in my self, so that it was not Riches, nor Honours that drew me higher, but meer Conscience,

science, and Obedience to that Call, which I judged was of, and from the Lord; the thing having never been sought or desired by me, which hath much supported my Spirit under many tryals and temptations which I have met with since.

But all this is little in comparison of what I have yet (through grace) farther to speak, and that is; That the Lord hath been pleased, through his goodness, to own me in my Work, so that though I am the unworthiest in the world, yet I trust I may say with a holy reverence, and humble boldness, that my record is on high, and that God hath given me a seal of my Ministry in *Bristol*, there being many Souls in this City that lay weltring in their blood of ignorance, and ungodliness, when I came hither; that are now, through the riches of grace, made living and pretious Stones, and are able to give to any man that shall ask them, a clear account, of the time when, the place where, the manner how, and the word and instrument by which the Lord was pleased to turn their Souls unto himself, several of which are since received into this Church, and though they seem contemptible now in your eyes, and in the eyes of some others, yet I have good ground to believe that they are pretious in the sight of the Lord Jesus, and will be found in him at his appearance.

Likewise I doubt not but I have a testimony in your conscience (though now it seem obliterated) that you have found by experience, that Christ was with me in my Work, and I am sure I have often heard it from your mouth (if that were worth any thing) &c.

But I trust there are hundreds in *Bristol*, that can say, That the Lord hath been, and still is, with my Ministry, quickning, comforting, teaching, and refreshing their Souls, howeyer you and others make it your work to traduce and reproach me, casting contempt upon me, to weaken my hands, and sadden my Spirit, and what in you and them lyeth, to discourage, and take off people from hearing of me; you saying to one in this City, *That I Preach the Doctrine of Devils, &c.* And to another, *That I*
do

do more hurt to your Way, than all the Preachers in Bristol : Others cry me down as an *Usurper, Uncalled, Unlearned, Ignoramus, &c.* And another in his late Book, loads me with *Stoffs, Jeers, Derisions, &c.* which makes me wonder, That you and they which are so different in other things, yet can all agree, to cast stones at me, and discouragements upon me, who never intended them or you any hurt, &c.

But, through grace, I find this by experience, That all your and their labour (as to this particular) is in vain, for the more you and they strive to beat me down, and to cast me out of the hearts of the people, the more room the Lord gives me in them, and the more prosperous and successful, I trust (and some think) my work is among them, through the help, grace, and goodness of my dear Lord Jesus: I write this with lowliness and humility, without boasting or vanity, to the praise of God, and to the stopping the mouth of envie, &c.

It is true, I am no Preacher of that thing which you, and some of your way, call the Gospel, namely, *To bid every man turn to a Light within him :* neither did I ever read, or hear, that any of the Prophets, Apostles, or holy men of God did preach such a Gospel, &c.

But that Gospel of good newes and glad tydings, which Jesus Christ gives commission and commandment to be published and preached, to all Nations, and to every creature, that Gospel I preach, and you have sometimes born witness to me therein, though now your testimony be veiled, even the Gospel of the grace of God, as *Acts 20. 24.* wherein the everlasting love, grace, and good-will of God in Christ, is freely published and declared to poor lost and done sinners, and the way to eternal life by Jesus Christ, through Faith in his blood and righteousness, &c. this Gospel I preach, pressing all that receive it to give up themselves to Christ in love and obedience, according to the scope and tenor of the Gospel.

But the great Argument by which you would prove me to be no Minister of the Gospel is (my speaking, as you say,
in

in the second branch of your title page) of having *Sarah Latchet* whipt and sent to Bridwel, &c. Now that the Reader may be informed, and you, if possible, convinced of your weakness and folly in publishing this thing; I shall here faithfully relate the truth of that story.

This *Sarah Latchet* was sometime a Member with the Baptized people in *Bristol*, but Apostatizing from them, was Excommunicated by them, and so doth seem to have the greater hatred to, and rage against the truth, wayes, and people of Christ; this *Sarah Latchet* being one of the fiercest sort of the people who call themselves *Quakers*, hath come several times to disturbe us in our Meetings: I shall mention three times especially.

First, Once in the publick Place after Sermon was done, she fell a rayling at me, as their manner is, with fierce and cruel words, at which time she was only turned out of the place, and nothing done to her.

Secondly, Another time the Church being assembled to break Bread, and to celebrate the Lords Supper, this *Sarah Latchet* came into the place, I having spoken to the Church a word of Exhortation, in reference to that Ordinance, and addressing my self to administer it to the Church, this *Sarah Latchet* came rushing up towards the Table, and in the face of me, with a loud shrill voice began thus, *O thou deceiver, the plagues of the eternal God, &c.* I spake not a word to her, but desired the Church, to be still in their spirits, and to mind the work in hand; one of our Brethren stept forth, and took her by the arm, and led her to the door, and put her forth; and this was all the hurt she had at that time.

Thirdly, Another time, the Church being assembled, at the usual time and place of Meeting, one of our Brethren being in prayer, as soon as ever he had done, she being present in the room, did again with a loud shrill voice begin thus, *The Prayers of the wicked are abomination to the Lord, &c.* and so ran on a long time, with railing, menacing, dreadful, expressions, wher upon I did endeavour to stop her, by casting in some words, but it would not be, she

she still continued to heap up, and threaten plagues and judgements against us ; then I went near, thinking to speak a word to her, but she let flee at me with a multitude of rayling, reviling terms, such as they use to give to the Ministers of the Nation, and that in such a fierce and furious manner, as hardly any Scould in the street could parallel ; whereupon I spake these words, or to this effect, *That it were fitter such an idle Huswife as she was, should be whipt, and sent to Bridwel to work, than to go about railing at people as she did.* And when I had spoken these words, I went from her, and she went her way, and never was questioned, nor punished for any of these abuses ; and those words I spake but once to her, and this was all I did and the occasion of it, upon which you build your great structure, concluding that I am no Minister of the Gospel, but a Persecutor of the truth, &c. as in your large Letter to me thereupon you declared ; and that now in the title page of your Pamphlet you proclaim to the Nation, &c. but I wish you lay a better foundation for your other buildings, lest you prove a foolish builder.

Now I would ask you a few sober Questions.

First, *How comes it to pass, that you can stile Sarah Latchet a Servant of Jesus, and publish her so to the world, who is an Apostate, and an Excommunicate person, going on in such a rayling, reviling, fierce, manner, as hath been now declared, and as divers witnesses can prove, whereas there are many pretious Servants of Jesus, and Saints of the most High, now living in England and Bristol, that have been known to walk with God for many years in uprightness, their foot having held its steps, and not declined from the good wayes of the Lord, neither gone back from the Commandments of his lips, but have esteemed his words, before their appointed food, and have stood fast in the worst of Times, and sorest of Tryals, &c. and yet they must be censured, judged, condemned, and cryed out against by you, as if they were the vilest Persons on earth, and all because they cannot close in with you, and your way ? &c.*

Secondly,

Secondly. *How durst you in your Conscience say, That these raylings, revilings, cursings, and lies, &c. which she uttered, are a testifying from the Lord? Do you not blush to name, or write such a word? Will Jehovah, the great and glorious God of Heaven and Earth, ever own such raylings, revilings, &c. to be a testifying from him? Or will he ever justify you, in what you have here written, and published to the world? O be ashamed, and confounded, poor deceived man.*

Thirdly, *How will you bring both ends of your Parallel together: you endeavour in your Letter to parallel Sarah Latchet with Paul, and Sarah Latchet's sufferings with Paul's sufferings, and me with Paul's Persecutors? Now then let me a little examine your parallel.*

1. *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ, having received a Commission from heaven, doth accordingly preach and publish the glorious Gospel of the grace, mercy, and love of God in Christ to poor sinners; and likewise sets forth the Lord Jesus, in his person, virtues, and offices, inviting and beseeching, with all love and tenderness, those where ever he came to receive this grace, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, &c. And Sarah Latchet comes forth rayling, reviling, cursing, &c. Ergo: Sarah Latchet and Paul are alike.*

2. *After Paul had with meekness and love, tendred the grace of God, and the person, and vertues of Jesus Christ, the Saviour, as before, some did rise up against him, beat him, stone him, imprison him, and whip him, so that five times he received forty stripes save one, with many other sore and cruel abuses, as you mention in your Letter out of 2 Cor. 11. &c.*

And Sarah Latchet, after she had rayled, reviled, and pronounced curses against people; it was said to her, It were fitter such an idle Huswife were sent to Bridwel; Ergo, Sarah Latchet's sufferings, and Paul's sufferings, are both alike, &c.

3. *Paul's Persecutors, after they had heard the precious glad-tydings of the Gospel, and the report of Jesus Christ*

made unto them, as before, did actually take, and cruelly beat, stone, whip, and imprison *Paul*, &c. And I after I had been reviled, rayled upon, &c. said of *Sarah Latchet*, it were fitter she were whipt and sent to Bridwel, Ergo, *Pauls* Persecutors, and I, were both alike, and under the same condemnation, &c.

Is this good Logick? May not all that read your lines, read your folly? &c. But to go on.

Fourthly, Will you ask your Conscience this question, Did you not publish and set forth this thing (to wit, of my not being a Minister of the Gospel, &c.) to lay me, if you could under contempt and scorn, both in the City and Nation, though you know in what sense, and upon what ground, I had denyed the title and dignity of a Minister, as I have before declared: but you knowing that this was a nail that would go, and therefore you strick here; and was not this such another piece of envie and hypocrisie, as poor *Mrs. Prince* did manifest when she came to rayl at me, and reproach me at my Lecture at *Nicholas*, when in her Conscience she durst not object against any thing that was delivered, though it were often put to her by me, but instead thereof, after much bitter revilings against me, called to the People, and bid them to beware of me, for she had heard me say, I had not the Spirit of God, &c.

Now suppose this had been true, That I had at any time uttered my complaint to her, or any others, in the sadness and bitterness of my soul, when under temptation (as the Lord knows what sad hours and dark dayes I have passed through, since I came to *Bristol*) though you and many others little observed it, or enquired after it: but suppose, I say, I had uttered my complaint to her, as she and many others have done to me, was it a Christian-like part in her, to publish this in the face of a Congregation, many of which might be apt enough to take up a prejudice against me? &c. would you, or she, or any other, think it, either honesty, christianity, ingenuity, civility, or humanity in me, if I should publish to the world, what you, or she, or they have at any time uttered to me, as a matter of grief, burden, trouble, sadness, affliction, or temptation, that lay

lay upon your, or their spirits ? now both you and she also knew full well the sad complaints of my soul under the sense of my own weakness, the sore and terrible temptations that I encountered with the greatness and weightiness of my work, the many eyes that were upon me, and the great dishonour that would have come to the name of Christ, if I should have miscarried in my work; which made me to see the necessity, and prize the excellency and long for the supplies of the Spirit of Christ, and often to complain of that small measure I apprehend I had of it, &c.

But Secondly, Both you and she, and some others, know in your Consciences that there was another ground upon which, and another sense in which, I had sometimes questioned, whether I and many other Christians, had yet received the Spirit : which for the Readers information, and my own vindication, I shall now declare: When I lived in *London*, and sate under the Ministry of some choice godly men, I did sometimes hear expressions to this effect, That there was a two-fold coming of the Spirit of Christ into the hearts of Believers. The first was that by which the eyes of mens understandings are opened, and they turned from darkness to light, Faith and Repentance, wrought in the Soul, conversion, regeneration, or the new birth, effected ; and so he that was once a dead sinner, becomes a living Saint or Believer, though as yet but weak, a babe in Christ, &c.

The Second work or coming of the Spirit, is that by which the Soul is sealed, confirmed, established, filled with joy and peace in believing, and fitted and furnished to every good work, that God calls them, whether doing or suffering, &c.

Now this put me upon the search of the Scripture, as first, *Ephes. 1. 13.* *After you believed, you were sealed:* which Scripture relates to that *Acts 19. 2.* *Have you received the holy Spirit since you believed? &c.* So *Acts 8. 14. to 17.* *Samaria* having received the Word of God, and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, were baptized by *Philip*

the Deacon, the Church at Jerusalem, or rather the Apostles sent forth Peter and John, that they should pray, that they might receive the holy Ghost, for as yet he was not fallen upon any of them, &c. Another Scripture, I find, *Joh. 7. 37, 38, 39. In the last day the great day of the feast Jesus stood and cryed, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, he that believeth on me as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: but this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive, for the holy Ghost was not yet (given) because that Jesus was not yet glorified: So Luke 11. 9. to 13. such as God is a Father unto, are bid to pray, to ask, to seek, and to knock, &c. with assurance, by many Arguments, that they should receive the holy Spirit: So in the 14, 15, 16, Chapters of John, our Saviour speaking to such as did believe in him, love him, and keep his Commandments, &c. he promiseth to send the Comforter unto them, even the holy Spirit which the world could not receive, &c. and so this agree many of the Prophecies both in Isa. Jer. Ezek Joel, Zach. and others.*

Now then as to the first work or coming of the Spirit, (namely) to make a man to become a Saint, a Christian, a Believer, a new Creature, &c. I never denied, but alwayes affirmed, that whosoever did believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, or had the least beginning of a work of Grace in their Souls, it was by the Spirit of God, and they had the Spirit of Christ in the first sense, according to *Rom 8. 9. now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, &c.*

But in the second or latter sense, namely, to seal, stablish, fill with joy and comfort, &c. with many other glorious effects which the Scripture speaks of, and which the Saints in the primitive times, did enjoy, in this sense I have often said, that I did question, Whether I (then) had, or whether many others in the Church had received the Spirit? and to this you did then assent, &c. And therefore I did often press it in the Church, that we might pray more for that blessed Spirit, according to the command and promise of

of Christ, *Luke* 11. 9. 13. as before ; and this is that which I have often called the great legacie of the new Testament, and as Jesus Christ was the great promise of the first or old Testament, so this blessed Spirit is the great promise of the second or new Testament, which all believers are to wait, pray, and long for, as the believers under the first Testament, were to wait and long for the *Messiah* ; and this was my meaning, when I have sometimes said, That a man may be a Christian, a Believer, a converted Soul, or a babe in Christ, and not as yet have received the Spirit, I mean still in this latter sense, in respect of sealing, establishing, &c. yet I neither did, nor do expect the Gift of tongues, or working Miracles, &c. neither do I find that the great promise of the Spirit, was principally to that end, though that was accomplished by it, when and how the Lord pleased, as *Heb* 2. 4. with divers miracles and gifts, or distributions of the holy Ghost, according to his own will, but I find rather that the great promise of the Spirit, is, for such glorious ends as these, &c.

1. To open and reveal the hidden Mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, as *Matth* 13. 11. *to you it is given to know the Mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, &c.* So *1 Cor* 2. 9. to the 14. we read that those things which the eyes of men (as men) have not seen, neither can the natural man perceive, yet God doth reveal by his Spirit, &c. So it is promised in *John*, to lead and guide into all truth, therefore, *Eph* 1. 17. the Apostle prays for believers, that they might receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, &c.

2. To comfort and chear up poor drooping believers, filling them with all joy and peace, consolation and refreshment, which is one main end for which it is promised : as in 14. 15, 16, Chapters of *John*, to which agree many of the sayings of the Prophets, &c.

3. To heighten and strengthen the Saints with boldness, courage, constancy, and resolution in their Spirits, to do, or to suffer for God, as *Acts* 4. 8. *Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost, said, &c.* so to the 19. vers. So *Acts* 5. 41. *And they — rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer*

for, &c. which thing neither they nor Peter could do (a little before, as *Mark 14. 50. 66 to 71.*) But observe, they had not then received the Spirit, so *Acts 16. 25.* Paul and Silas sang in prison

4. To purge and purifie, cleanse and sanctifie believers, and make them holy, as *Isa. 4. 3, 4.* so *Ezek. 36. 25. to 29. Joel. 3. 17.* then shall Jerusalem be holy, that is, when the Mountains shall drop new wine, and the hills flow with milk; as *vers. 18.* And the fountain come forth of the house of the Lord, to water the valley of Shittim.

5. To make poor, dry, barren, empty souls to become fruitful to God, and to grow in grace, *Isa. 32. 5.* until the Spirit be poured from on high, and the wilderness become a fruitful field, *Isa. 44. 3, 4.* I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, &c. and they shall spring up, &c. so *Hos. 14. 5.* I will be as the dew unto Israel, and he shall grow, &c.

6. To fill the Saints with meekness and love, yea, with endeared love towards Christ, and bowels of pity towards men, as we see it was with the Saints in the primitive times, but is much wanting now

7. To unite the Saints more together in judgement and affection into one heart, and one way, as the Scripture speaks.

8. To make them more exact and spiritual in the use and practise of all Gospel Ordinances, as *Acts 2. 41. to 47.*

9. To beautifie and adorn Christians with every spiritual gift and grace, as *Gal. 5. 22. Ezek. 16. 10, 11, 12, 13.*

10. To fill them with a mighty Spirit of Faith and Prayer, as the Saints in the primitive times, after the pouring forth of the Spirit had.

In a word it is a Christians *All*, for by it he can do all things, as *Phil. 1. 19. 4. 13.* and without it he can do nothing well, as *John 15. 5. Without me ye can do nothing.*

And thus I have declared my judgment fully about this blessed truth, and what I mean by the pouring forth of the glorious Spirit which I so often mention in prayer and preaching, as the great legacy, privilege, and portion of the

the Saints or believers in the New Testament, &c.

Now then let me ask you this Question, Whether it had not been better for you, and those that are gone away with you, that you had set your selves solemnly to seek the Lord by Supplication and Prayer, and so have continued in the wayes, and under the Ordinances of Christ, waiting for that blessed spirit, as many of the Servants of God have done, and still do, &c. rather than to have taken up a Notion of a *Light in every man*, and call that *the eternal Spirit*, as some of your way do, and then jeer and scoff at them, that pray for the Spirit, and reproach them which complain out of their sense of the want of it, as poor Mrs. Prince did, when she came to revile me at my Lecture, &c. But blessed be the Lord, there are many Churches in *England and Wales*, that are now wrestling with the Lord day after day joyntly, and day and night singly (in the deep sense of their wants) for the accomplishment of that glorious, new-Testament promise, and such an Answer is already given to some, both Independant and Baptized, as you call them, that they have no cause to repent of the time they have set apart for that work; and I verily believe, That if the people whom you and others so much despise, go on and continue praying as now they do, for the pouring forth of the blessed Spirit, there will shortly be such a breaking forth of the day of Christ, that all the antichristian fogs, of false doctrines and false worships, will flie and fall, as the darkness before the rising Sun.

And Oh that some men in *England and Bristol* that are now wrangling and quarrelling about their humane learning, and scoffing and envying those that have it not, would seriously consider this thing, before their lamp go out in obscurity, and their feet stumble upon the dark mountains, before their arm be dried up, and their eye utterly darkned, &c.

Now before I part with this, I will also clear my self about another expression, that I have sometimes used, and at which many have been offended, and that is about an old and a new Testament Spirit (though of late to avoid offence,

offence, have forbore it) now by those expressions, I did not mean nor intend the Spirit of God, so as to call that an old Testament Spirit, for I know that Spirit, was one and the same from everlasting, but by an old or new-Testament Spirit.

1. I mean the frame and temper of a mans own Spirit, and so by an old-Testament Spirit, I alwayes mean, that dark, weak, childish and low frame and temper of Spirit, which professors generally had, in the time of the old Testament, while under the *Mosaical* administration, with that bondage and fear, that weakness and sadness, that did accompany it, &c.

2. By a new-Testament Spirit, I alwayes mean, that lively, chearful, active, joyful, bold, son-like frame and temper of Spirit, which the Saints generally in the primitive times under the new Testament did enjoy, which is called a Spirit of Adoption, as the other is called a Spirit of Bondage ; a full description of what I mean is set forth in two Scriptures, as namely, *Gal. 4.* from the 1. to the 7. and *Heb. 12* from 18 to 24. In which two Scriptures is set forth,

First, The weakness, darknes, childishness, fear, bondage, &c. of the old-Testament state, which is that that I call, the frame, temper, or spirit of the old-Testament.

And Secondly, There is set forth, the light, life, strength, boldness, comfort, courage, joy, & rejoycing of the new-Testament state, which is that that I call, the frame, temper, or Spirit of the new Testament, &c. And whether Christians be not generally, more under the old-Testament frame, than under the new, I leave to their experiences : and thus I have fully declared my self, as to these two particulars ; and if any sober Christian, into whose hands this may come, shall apprehend that I am mistaken in either of them. I shall be glad to receive a word from them in love, but I do not expect it from you, to, whom I now write, &c.

You farther tell me in your Letter, that you were warned

warned from invisible lights some months past, to beware of me, which you could not believe, till now it breaks out like fire, &c. I conceive those invisible lights, were some secret whisperers that did bring you many stories, both of me, and others, &c. but truly I could discern by visible light, long before you left us, that my speaking was but little acceptable to you, and some others, especially after I did begin to oppose your spleen and passion, though whilst I sat still and silently approved of what you spake; then I was the excellentest man that ever you met with, & you would often, both to my face, and behind my back; applaud and extol me; but when once I began a little to cross you, as many others of the Brethren did, and as some godly men had formerly done (as they saw cause enough) then you and your partie began to fume and fret, and as it was often observed to go out of the Meetings, when I had been to speak though I did oppose you with all the tenderness that possibly I could, as knowing what a partie you had in the Church, and what influence you had upon them; but now you say the fruits doth appear, and break out like fire, &c.

Q. And what is it? But that I should say, That such an idle Hufwife, as is before mentioned, should be sent to *Bridwel*, rather than to go rayling about, as she did: Now I appeal to all Christians upon the face of the earth, what hurt this was, to this poor, rayling, cursing, fierce creature? &c.

Q. And was this the ground upon which some of your company spread it about the Country, and place of my nativity, what a persecutor I was become, so that the good people there, that had known me to be of another temper, did wonder, and were troubled, until they understood, what you and your company meant by such things, and that it was because I would not joyn with you and your new Religion, and with the people that call themselves Quakers. Again, Was this the ground upon which you did so often cry out against Judases in the Church, a little before you left us; but blessed be the Lord, we can now

offence, have forbore it) now by those expressions, I did not mean nor intend the Spirit of God, so as to call that an old Testament Spirit, for I know that Spirit, was one and the same from everlasting, but by an old or new-Testament Spirit.

1. I mean the frame and temper of a mans own Spirit, and so by an old-Testament Spirit, I alwayes mean, that dark, weak, childish and low frame and temper of Spirit, which professors generally had, in the time of the old Testament, while under the *Mosaical* administration, with that bondage and fear, that weakness and sadness, that did accompany it, &c.

2. By a new-Testament Spirit, I alwayes mean, that lively, chearful, active, joyful, bold, son-like frame and temper of Spirit, which the Saints generally in the primitive times under the new Testament did enjoy, which is called a Spirit of Adoption, as the other is called a Spirit of Bondage; a full description of what I mean is set forth in two Scriptures, as namely, *Gal. 4.* from the 1. to the 7. and *Heb. 12* from 18 to 24. In which two Scriptures is set forth,

First, The weakness, darkness, childishness, fear, bondage, &c. of the old-Testament state, which is that that I call, the frame, temper, or spirit of the old-Testament.

And Secondly, There is set forth, the light, life, strength, boldness, comfort, courage, joy, & rejoycing of the new-Testament state, which is that that I call, the frame, temper, or Spirit of the new Testament, &c. And whether Christians be not generally, more under the old-Testament frame, than under the new, I leave to their experiences: and thus I have fully declared my self, as to these two particulars; and if any sober Christian, into whose hands this may come, shall apprehend that I am mistaken in either of them. I shall be glad to receive a word from them in love, but I do not expect it from you, to whom I now write, &c.

You farther tell me in your Letter, that you were warned

warned from invisible lights some months past, to beware of me, which you could not believe, till now it breaks out like fire, &c. I conceive those invisible lights, were some secret whisperers that did bring you many stories, both of me, and others, &c. but truly I could discern by visible light, long before you left us, that my speaking was but little acceptable to you, and some others, especially after I did begin to oppose your spleen and passion, though whilst I sat still and silently approved of what you spake, then I was the excellentest man that ever you met with, & you would often, both to my face, and behind my back, applaud and extol me; but when once I began a little to cross you, as many others of the Brethren did, and as some godly men had formerly done (as they saw cause enough) then you and your partie began to fume and fret, and as it was often observed to go out of the Meetings, when I had been to speak, though I did oppose you with all the tenderness that possibly I could, as knowing what a partie you had in the Church, and what influence you had upon them; but now you say the fruits doth appear, and break out like fire, &c.

Q. *And what is it?*] But that I should say, That such an idle Hufwife, as is before mentioned, should be sent to *Bridwel*, rather than to go rayling about, as she did: Now I appeal to all Christians upon the face of the earth, what hurt this was, to this poor, rayling, cursing, fierce creature? &c.

Q. And was this the ground upon which some of your company spread it about the Country, and place of my nativity, what a persecutor I was become, so that the good people there, that had known me to be of another temper, did wonder, and were troubled, until they understood, what you and your company meant by such things, and that it was because I would not joyn with you and your new Religion, and with the people that call themselves *Quakers*. Again, Was this the ground upon which you did so often cry out against *Judas* in the Church, a little before you left us; but blessed be the Lord, we can now

rejoice, that the innocencie of the upright is cleared, and the *Judas'es* are discovered, &c. and whether I or you have betrayed and crucified the Lord Jesus, in his Saints, in his waies, in his name, and in his truth, I shall humbly leave, &c. I do not boast, but desire with all humilitie and reverence to acknowledge and admire the power, grace, mercy, and goodness of him by whom, I a poor worm have been preserved, whilst such a Cedar, or Star, as you were taken to be, is so sadlie fallen; but it is no more than what some have thought and said long ago, That pride and arrogancie would have a fall, as *Prov. 29. 23.* But let him that thinketh he stands, take heed lest he fall, &c. *1 Cor. 10. 12.*

But now you say, I openly oppose the appearance of Christ, where it is found in life and power, &c. What, because I said of that poor deluded Creature, *It were fitter she were sent to Bridwel?* O poor deceived man, that you should be a professor of Religion, so long, and now come to publish such a piece of folly to the world, as to call the fierce raylings, &c. of these people, *the appearances of Christ, in life and power*; and my speaking that one word to her once, *an opposing of Christ, &c.* whereas she had no hurt done her, ner a word spoken to any Magistrate against her; nay, though she, and others of your way, have 16 or 17 times opposed me, and rayled at me, yet never but once, and that but once was questioned or imprisoned for it, and yet I am cried out against in word and writing by you and your companie, as the great persecutor, which now you tell the world you have been warned by invisible lights some months past, to beware of me: But how can you call *Sarah Latchet* the *Servants* of God, and *Witnesses* of Jesus (in the plural number) whereas it was but to the only, and that but once I spake those words, though she rayled at me many times, but ask your own heart, whether your Design were not to draw out my supposed Offence to the world, and then consider, whether instead thereof you have not let out your own folly, envie, and hypocrisie? But where is that meekness, and bearing, that some of you boast

Since this I
have been three
times disturbed
for which one
is now impris-
oned.

boast of, *that you would not return evil for evil, but being cursed, you bless, &c.* Poor creatures, it is an easie thing to flatter your selves, and speak words, &c. but let any one touch you, though but in a word, and they shall find you as rough, both in rayling and writing, as any: But what would you have done unto me, if I should have come into your Meetings and disturbed you, and railed at you, &c. as she and others have done at me, you would have sent me (not to *Bridwel*) but to the bottomless pit, if words could have done it? You close your Letter with many seeming expressions of love and pity: as,

1. That I might see the sandiness of my foundation.
2. Know the things that belong to my peace.
3. Escape the pit.
4. Not shut up the kingdom of Heaven against my self and others, &c.

1. As for my foundation, I know no other, nor preach no other than that foundation and Corner stone which is laid in *Sion*, even Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Son of man, in one person, upon whom, through grace, I have cast my soul for eternity, and other foundations I look not for, &c.

2. As to my knowing the things that belongs to my peace, &c. I bless the Lord it is the groaning of my soul to him, for that blessed Spirit of revelation, in the knowledge of the Myserie of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, that I may believe more, love more, and obey more, &c.

3. As for my escaping the Pit: I desire the like for you: and in order to that, I have consented to, and helped on, the Admonitions that have been sent by the Church to you, and the other poor souls that are with you, &c.

4. But fourthly, As for my shutting up the kingdom against my self, and others, &c. I can say, through grace, it hath been, and is daily my great care and work, to preach the kingdom of God freely to sinners, and to set forth the Lord Jesus Christ, as the way to that kingdom, and to invite, and encourage all poor souls to come into that kingdom,

dom, by Jesus Christ the true door or way, and by the strait gate of believing, which the Scribes and Pharisees, by putting men upon working for life, did shut up against themselves, and others: and who doth so now, but those that bid all men *turn to a Light within them*, and so take them off from believing on the person of Jesus Christ, or looking to be saved by what he hath done, and suffered, wrought, and accomplished for man. &c.

But I suppose your meaning is, That I should give over preaching, and come to you, and your way; I know this hath been the longing desire of many of you a great while: for these were the words of one of your way, the last time I was in your house, *That I kept many from receiving, or embracing the Light*: but I desire to bless the Lord, that through the riches of his grace to my soul, I have been hitherto preserved, and I have seen my Call to, and Work in this City clearer since you left us, than ever I did before, both as to this poor desolate Church, and likewise to many precious souls in *Bristol*, among both of which I trust I may say with humility and comfort, that God hath made me of some use, though I be as nothing, &c. And truly I do hope, that God who chuseth the things that are not, to confound the things that are, &c. wil yet use me, as an instrument for good unto his people in this City, and the rather because, both you with them of your way, and others that are of other waies, do so violently, and causelessly set against me, which makes me sometimes take up the complaint of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Jer. 15. 10. *Wo is me, &c. I have neither lent upon usury, nor have men lent me upon usury, and yet every one of them doth curse me, or speak evil upon me*, as some translations read it: but blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that yet my lamp is not gone forth in obscure darkness, &c. And thus I have done with the substance of your Letter, I intend to add a short word to the ensuing part of your Book, but I shall first make a little digression, by joyning an occasional word to what I have now written, &c.

I shall desire you to Consider, Whether you I are not
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by this act of yours, in publishing me thus to the world; tickled the hearts, and pleased the fancies of many, who were full enough of prejudice against me before; nay, are you not joyned as a Brother in bitterness, with him that wrote the late Book, called, *Satan Enthroned in his chair of Pestilence*: Let any judicious Christian compare your Book with the latter part of his, and see whether those two bitter streams, do not both arise from one corrupt fountain; namely, the Spirit that is from beneath: may not I return your own words upon you, which you unjustly charge upon me and this Church, from *Obediah* 11, *Thou wast like one of them, &c.* and is this the kindness of a friend, or the part of a brother? O how truly are those Scriptures fulfilled in you, *Mic. 7. 5. Trust ye not in a friend &c. Jer. 9. 4. Take ye heed, &c.* for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. You had written your Letter to me about a year ago; and if you had known ought by me, you might have written more; but for you, now to publish it to the world, and to proclaim it in your Frontispiece, and that in such a subtle manner, that he that reads your title page and my name, would verily think (if they did not know otherwise) that I were some dreadful persecutor, and that I had caused some Servant of Christ to be whipt and punished: but I trust the Lord will look upon my wrong, and your envie; my innocency, and your hypocrisies, &c. but I know it is in vain to write farther to you, and truly had it not been for the vindication of the truth, and satisfaction of some poor souls in this City and Nation, I should have cast your Book, and the other mans Book aside, and never have troubled my self to have answered you or him; but since it is so, that both your Books are spread abroad, and read by many, at which some are grieved, others staggered, and people generally apt to conclude that things are so, as he and you have said, because I am silent and say nothing, as I remember it was with me once before, when a publick Scandal was raised and cast upon me at my first coming to *Bristol*, which the Lord knew, and I in my

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own Conscience knew, I was as innocent in, as any man or child under heaven, and therefore sat still about half a year, resolving my innocency should answer for me, &c. which made many conclude I was guilty because I was silent, till at length I was forced to seek a publick Vindication by the Magistrate (which I had) and then the mouths of bad people were stopped, and the minds of good people satisfied:

So I conceive it might be now, if I were wholly silent, as to what you and he do write, though indeed I had resolved silence, and to have given you, and him, and others, leave to have trampled upon me; and were I in a private capacity, I think I should do so: but forasmuch as the Lord hath set me as a publick instrument in his work, and that that which you and he have written of me, tends much to the defaming of me, and the hindrance of my work, by laying stumbling blocks of prejudice, into the minds of people against me, I therefore think my self bound for the truths sake, and for the sake of some good people in this City, being thereunto also advised and perswaded by godly friends, to set forth a few words of truth and soberness, both to your Book and his.

And I desire that neither you nor he will be offended that I joyn you both together in this my Answer, for first you are much alike Brethren in bitterness, against the people called Independants and Baptized, as may be seen throughout your Book: and in the latter part of his.

Secondly, I find, that he hath often joyned you with me, therefore I think it not improper to couple him with you, and I hope that neither your friends, nor his, will look upon my so doing as any disparagement to you, or him. Yet I must needs say in some things he is more modest than you in that he doth not name me, as you often do, though in some things you are more serious than he, in that you do not see me as he often doth; but both you and he have done what you could, to lay me under contempt and scorn to the whole City and Nation; and therefore I shall now address my self to answer some few passages in his

Book,

Book, though not for your information, but for my own Vindication, and for publick and general satisfaction, &c.

And first in the 48 page of that his Book, called, *Satan enthroned in his Chair of Pestilence, &c.* he tells a story, how they, meaning the Church in *Bristol*, send for a Taylor out of *Wales* to be their Teacher, &c. in which he deals very dis-ingeniously, for first, he knew that I was sent for by the Major of the City, some Aldermen, many of the Council, and other Gentlemen and Commissioners of the City of *Bristol*, which I take to be the Representative of the City, &c. As likewise, I was sent for by many of the godly inhabitants, as I have elsewhere declared; and that not only to be a Teacher in the Church of *Bristol*, but to be a publick Preacher of the Gospel in the City, as I have, through the help and grace of Christ, hitherto continued; and he himself, at my first coming, gave me the right hand of fellowship, and professed he was satisfied in my Call.

But secondly, I was no more a Taylor in *Wales*, than he was any of his former Callings after he came to *Bristol*: For when I was called to Preach the Gospel in *Wales*, I left my former Employment, as he did leave his several Callings, when he took to preaching: the next thing concerning me in his Book, is page 50. where he mentioneth a great Woman, that had three Children unbaptized: the truth of which I shall relate, by which the falseness of his Relation will appear, &c. There was about the time of my coming first to *Bristol* a godly woman, one at whose Husbands house, the Church did often use to meet; she having been delivered of a Child, did about a month after desire the Church to meet at her house, to render praise to the Lord, and to spend some time in Prayer and conference, &c. Accordingly the Elder, that then was, did upon the first day of the Week appoint that the next Meeting should be at such a place, to such an end: now when the Church was met, she desired that her Children might also be presented to the Lord by Prayer, both that which she then lay in with, and one more about the age of two years,

years, whether any more of her Children were then present, I do not remember; but the like was done again about two years after, when the Lord gave her another Child, and as it hath been done for many others upon the like occasion, and as I have known it often done in *Wales*, and I here recommend it to all sober Christians, especially such as are dissatisfied in their judgments and Consciences, about Infants Baptism, namely, That when any godly Woman, a Member of a Congregation, hath received such a mercy, she should at some convenient season present her self with her Child in the Church, that Praise may be rendered to the Lord on her behalf, presenting her Child also to the Lord by Prayer, &c. at which time the Parents may declare in the Congregation the name of the Child, that it may be entered into the Book, where the names of the Congregation are written, as the Children of the Church, who upon occasion may be mentioned to the Lord as the seed of the faithful, that when these Children come to age, and the Lord shall give them to profess Faith in Christ, and that they do believe with all their hearts, as *Acts* 8. 37. they may then be admitted to the Ordinances of Christ, both Baptism, and the Lords Supper, as Believers were in the Primitive times, *Acts* 2. 41, 42. this I leave to the Consideration of all, but especially such as do not see ground to sprinkle their Children, and I the rather mention this, because there are many who since they left off Infant Baptism, that are (as I conceive) too remiss in the duty of thankfulness, and too careless of the precious Souls of their Children, &c.

Now this was all, that I know, that was in the eye and intent of this godly Woman, and this was the utmost which was done at that time, concerning the Woman and her two children, (which this man calls a bold-daring attempt) which I desire the judicious Reader to consider, &c. As for this jerking, jeering, quibbling, and scoffing at the learned Teacher, the reverent Congregation, the mock Ordinance, and dry Baptism, &c. I shall not answer him, lest I should be like unto him, neither can I say what

what discourse she had with the other discreet Gentlewoman which he mentioneth, but this I know, the Woman was a very judicious Christian, and was well informed and satisfied about the unwarrantableness of Infant-Baptism, and was her self shortly after Baptized, according to the true intent, manner and administration of that Ordinance, so that this was no invention to give her satisfaction, as he saith; neither did she or any of the Congregation look upon this as Baptism, for both she and they (for ought I know) were fully satisfied against that practice, before I had ever any acquaintance with her or them; and for his jerking, and jeering again about prayer, before and after and about the words of Institution to the new Ordinance, &c. All which might better become the mouth of a Stage-player, than the pen of a Minister. And for his saying the Children were as much heathen as before; truly I trust they had more benefit by this solemn act of the Churches prayer, than if he had in his way baptized them; but I did not think till now, that he had held that Children were made Christians by Baptism.

The next thing he mentions is, about my being Baptized at London, &c. I had two reasons for my being Baptized there rather than here: First, because I am a Member of a Church there, who are of the same judgement, as to this particular: Secondly, because I knew none here that had that latitude in their Principles, as to Baptize me, unless I should come off from this Church in point of Communion, which in my conscience I could not do, I knowing them to be a precious godly people, how ever now under contempt; but that I did it there, or that I concealed it at all to save my Maintenance, that is not true; for I did publicly own it as soon as I did come home, though with that moderation and tenderness, as not to grieve or offend any, but as for his jerking and jeering, at my falling from dry Baptism to Dipping, &c. I shall not answer him: But for that godly man Mr. Jesse, whom he calls an *Anabaptist*, Teacher of London, I shall not say much for him, he hath grace enough to bear his reproches,

onely this I must say ; his coming hither was not to perform any *Bishop-like* confirmation, as this man seems to intimate ; but rather to endeavour the settling and establishing the minds of the People of this Citie, against the pernicious Doctrine of the *Quakers* ; and I believe his endeavours were not successles in that thing. Again, for my becoming an open professed Dipper, (as he saith) though I abhor his jeering, yet I do own the word and practice, and therein I do no more than all the Preachers in *Bristol* do, for they Baptize and Preach, and I Preach and Baptize ; onely they Baptize Infants, and I Baptize Men and Women, as *Philip* did, *Acts* 8. 12. and whose practice is most justifiable, theirs or mine, I refer to the Scriptures in their proper and genuine sense to determine, and to any judicious impartial Scholar to interpret, as *John* 3. 23. *Acts* 8. 37, 38, 39. *Acts* 10. 47, 48. *Acts* 22. 16. But for my unchristening him and his Children ; I never uttered such a word ; but if my practice grounded upon Scripture do it, I ought not to be blamed : Likewise for his unchristian-like dealing with that godly man, *Mr. Tombs*, publishing his name to the World ; I shall say little, for he hath wisdom and grace, either to answer him, or to bear his reproaches, onely this I perceive by a Letter from *Mr. Tombs*, that the thing is false ; And for his calling *Mr. Tombs* our greatest Champion, &c. truly the man is much mistaken, for we do not lean upon Man for our practice, we having both the Command and example of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his blessed Apostles, recorded in Scripture, as *Matt.* 28. *Mark* 16. *Luke* 3. 23, Christ himself was Baptized when he was about 30 years of age ; so that *Mr. Tombs*, is not our Champion : But for his mis-drawn consequences, how I can give the Lords Supper to the Devils children, if *Mr. Tombs* had said so, as he writes of him, would it therefore follow, that I, and all others, must be of *Mr. Tombs* his mind in that thing ? I cannot see this to be a necessary consequence, &c. but I do abhor and detest any such uncharitable sensoriousness, and I believe *Mr. Tombs* doth so also, &c.

He asketh further, by what authority I make a single judgement to my self; I ask again, how he durst to say that I make a single judgement to my self, when as there are many Churches, and many men both learned and godly, that are of my judgement in this particular, so as to hold communion with persons differing in that point? and so I do administer the Lords Supper to this people in *Bristol*, as they are a Church of godly sober Christians, believing in Christ, though some of them mis-baptized, yet none of them deny the Ordinance of Christ, onely some of them have not light to see the right Administration of it, but reckon their Infant Baptism sufficient; yet as further light comes in, they are willing to walk up to it, in the mean time we can bear with them in love, as we desire them and others, to bear with us in other things.

As for that mis-construed passage in my Lecture, about dry breasts, which he applies to Infant Baptism, &c. 1. I deny that ever I spoke those words in such terms: 2. Much less to that sense, but I have often prayed against that sore judgement threatned, *Hosea 9. 14.* and that I might not have a miscarrying womb, so as not to bring any soul to Christ by conversion; or dry breasts, so as not to feed or refresh any poor thirsty soul, that comes to wait upon God in his Ordinances, as I fear it is with many Congregations in *England*; and this was the substance and sense of what I spake, though as for Infant-Baptism, I have declared and do declare my dislike of it; yet so as not to judge or condemn any godly man, that thinks he hath Warrant to do it, &c.

And whereas he saith, That the professed, thorow-paced *Anabaptists*, leave me, and would not joyn with me, and therefore commends them that they are true to their principles, and do not juggle, implying that I am not so, but do juggle, &c. Truly I know no thorow pac'd, godly man, either *Anabaptist*, or others in *Bristol*, but do shew love and respect to me in their way, onely in this, they walk according to their light, and so do I; but they think I am too large in my Principles, and I think they are too

strait in theirs; yet we do not differ, but can bear with each other in love, though for my juggling or dis-ingenuity I pass not to be judged by him, &c. though I know it would please him better, if I were of a furious, impetuous, violent spirit, so as to break all in pieces, and set the Citty and this Church in a flame, and thereby make my self to be abhorred of all both good and bad; but, I trust, as the Lord hath, so he will graciously give me a more sober, sweet spirit, to walk tenderly towards all, and to do good to all: And truly I can say, through grace, that I do not love any man the more or less for his judgments sake, whether he be Presbyterian, Independent, Baptized, &c. But where ever I see the Image of Christ appear (which is love and holiness) there I desire to love and honor.

And for his large Parentheses, from page 52. to page 55. wherein he makes an Apologie for his bitterness & passion, (as he had need enough to do) and then closes with a proposal, that if we will but acknowledge his Ministry, Churches, and Ordinances, to be according to the Institutions of Christ, and such as with whom we will hold communion, then he will write a Retraction, &c.

I answer, let him first but prove that they are so, and then we will soon acknowledge it; but till then, though he be so wise as to propose it, we shall not be so foolish as to grant it, &c.

And as for his Marginal Note upon page 55. about our being thought to own their Ministry, because we hear some of them. Truly, I think, he had need not speak of that, for few of us do hear him, or intend it, till he be of another temper, yet I do not refuse to hear any sober, godly man, though I must needs say, I have but little comfort in, or encouragement to, the hearing of some, who are so often venting their passion and bitterness, &c.

The next thing concerning me is, *pag. 55.* where he layes an accusation against me, and the Society with whom I walk, that we neglected (for a long time) the Declarations of his (Highness) for solemn meetings, &c. whereby he endeavours if he could, to render me, and this Church, obnoxious in the
eye,

eyes of the Governours of *England*; but, through mercy, the chief Magistrate, and chief Governours of this Common-wealth, have more wisdom and grace, than to hearken to such accusations, especially from men of his temper; but if I were so wicked, and void of ingenuity, as to go about to accuse men for such neglects, I might find matter enough to write and publish against my neighbours; but I abhor and detest such an envious and unworthy spirit, &c. But I do not remember that ever this Church neglected one such meeting, neither did I ever omit above once or twice, at the most, preaching publickly, as I durst appeal to the whole Citie to bear me witness; but suppose I had upon the change of the Government, being scrupled or dissatisfied, so as to omit once or twice preaching, are there none in *England* or *Bristol* have done the like, and is it the part of a Minister to rake up old Stories, to present to the ears of the Magistrate, and to publish to the Nation to incesse them against a person or people that live peaceably under, are subject unto, and make supplication for those that are in authority, as the Scriptures require, *Titus* 3. 1. *1 Tim.* 2. 1, 2. and as we are well known to do, &c. I shall say no more but the Lord rebuke the Spirit of Envy, &c.

As for many other things in his Book, both concerning me and the Church with whom I walk; as first, his jeering at our cutting out Churches according to our fancied primitive pattern, and our being mar'd in the shaping, &c. wherein he pleaseth himself, and men like himself: And secondly, his gross-mistake in laying the blame of all the mischief the Quakers have done in *Bristol*, with many other evils and falsties to the charge of this poor Congregation, some of whom have stood as much, and born as full a testimony against the principles and practices of those miserable deluded people, as ever he hath done, and perhaps to better purpose, &c.

Now as for his large and unlearned Discourse about an ungodly learned man, being fitter to preach than a godly man, that wanteth onely human learning, in respect of divers
Tongues

Tongues; as likewise his supposed insufficiency of the Spirit of Christ, to furnish and accomplish, fit and enable men to that work, &c. I shall not undertake to answer every particular that he asserts about this matter, from pag. 62. to pag. 66. Onely if I might be thought worthy to inform such a man as he is, or any other of his mind, I should advise them to take heed of grating upon, jerking against, slighting or undervaluing of that blessed Spirit of the Lord Jesus, in any of its Offices, operations, effects, or different administrations, in and among the People or Church of God; I say, I should advise them to take heed, lest when God sets the solitary in families, the rebellious dwell in a dry land, and whilst some are like trees planted by the waters, never ceasing to yeild their fruit, others be like the Heath in the Desert, that should not see when God cometh, but inhabite the parched places in the wilderness; *For all the Trees of the field shall know, that the Lord can bring down the high Tree, and exalt the low Tree, he can dry up the green Tree, and make the dry Tree to flourish; yea, and by the pouring forth of the Spirit from on high can make the Wilderness become a fruitful Field, and the fruitful Field to be counted for a Forrest,* as Ezek. 17. 24. Isa. 32. 15.

He layes it upon some as a reproach, page 62. That we teach by the Spirit, &c. I desire humbly to acknowledge and attribute it unto the blessed Spirit of Christ, that I have at any time been, or now am enabled in any measure to speak or publish any truth of God, either to the conversion of sinners, or to the edification or consolation of the Saints and People of God; and truly if this man do not lean and depend upon the help of the Spirit in his work of preaching, I shall not much wonder, if his Ministry prove as I have sometimes said or feared, many mens have done, as a miscarrying Womb, and dry breasts, notwithstanding all their great learning, of which they seem to boast, &c. He further demands, page 62. whether all that have the Spirit can teach publickly, &c. First, if by teaching publickly, he mean preaching and publishing what God hath done for them; and likewise declaring to others what the

the Lord hath taught them, &c. Then I answer it is the duty of all Christians so to do, *1 Pet. 4. 10. As every man hath received the gifts, so let him minister the same, &c.* as *Eldad and Medad* did, *Numb. 11.* though one man envied, and another complained, as some do now, yet *Moses* the man of God, he approved of it, &c.

But secondly, if by preaching publickly, he mean a publick and solemn undertaking the work of preaching, &c. Then I answer, I do not think that every one, that hath the Spirit of Christ in him, or the work of grace in his soul, is fit to be a publick Preacher; for there are diversities of gifts, and differences of administrations, as appears, *1 Cor. 12. 4.* to the *11.* Yet, where the Spirit of God hath fitted any, and the People of God that know them well, do see them fit, and judge them fit, and approve of them publickly, calling them thereunto, these may be fit to teach publickly, at least to their own Nation, as the *70 Disciples* were, *Luke 10. 1.* though they had no gifts of Tongues as we read of, no more than the twelve Apostles had, during the time of their preaching to their own Nation, before the Assention of Christ; and that they were to preach to all Nations according to their second Commission, *Matt. 28. Mark 16.* yet I do not in the least slight, despise, or undervalue learning, nor learned men, that have grace with it, and do not scornfully trample upon them that want it; but to say that no man may preach without it, is to make a law, where Christ hath made none; for the seventy Disciples, and twelve Apostles, did preach long before the day of *Pentecost*, &c.

He likewise demands, who will step forth and tell him, (and not lie) that the Spirit doth teach them to understand the meaning of the word Justification, or Adoption, &c. I answer, if none but such as can speak Greek and Latin, can understand what Justification and Adoption is, &c. how then can any that have not Greek or Latin, believe they are justified or adopted, seeing that it is another Maxim in the Schools, that no man can believe more than he doth understand: But surely these Souls that have been first enlightened by the Word and Spirit of Christ, to see
and

and know their lost condition, while under sense of condemnation; and hath also been led by the same Spirit through the Word of grace, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all their hearts, and by his precious blood, to see themselves freed from condemnation, and in his righteousness to be made righteous, and so to find the comfort of it in some measure in their own souls, they can speak of it to the praise of God, and to the edification of others, and that by the help and assistance of the same blessed Spirit, yea perhaps more sensibly, feelingly, plainly, and profitably, than the most learned Doctor in the world, that knows it onely speculatively, by learning, reading, and studying.

As for that scornful word *unlettered*, which he doth so often use, and cast as a reproach upon some men, &c. I answer, truly some of us do know our Letters as well, and can put them together into Syllables and Sentences as right, and pronounce them as distinct and plain, perhaps as himself; but I shall not ad to this, onely conclude with *Prov. 3. 34. Surely the Lord scorneth the scorner, and giveth grace to the lowly.* And I desire seriously to weigh, and to commend to all sober Christians, those words of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 1. from 19 to 29. and Chap. 2. from 1. to 15. and Chap 3. 18, 19, 20.* by all which it appears, the great Apostle of Christ, was of another mind, than this man seems to be. He demands *page 65. what an unlettered Teacher; or Ignoramus* would say, if he were to discourse with a *Papist*, or an Adversary about Justification, &c. Truly, I would say this, if any should out of pride, curiosity, and vain confidence, run without a call, to discourse with an Adversary, (*Papists* or others) about that or any other point of Christianity, &c. he might expect that the Lord might justly leave him to himself, and so he might betray, or shame the truth, and so might it be with the most learned Teacher in the world.

But secondly, if a godly man were providentially, or clearly called, to maintain or defend, that or any other truth of God against an Adversary, (*Papist* or others) he going in the fear of the Lord, and in a sense of self-insufficiency,

Insufficiency, in faith and hope of the presence and assistance of the grace and Spirit of Christ, he might expect according to his promise, *Matt. 10. 9. Take no thought for it shall be given you in that same hour, what ye shall speak, And verse 20. For it is not ye which speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* And how truly was this fulfilled in the *Martyrs*, both in plain Country-men, and also Women, yea, young Youths and Mayds, who discoursing about points of Christian Religion, and disputing with men of as profound Learning, as some are now, who boast so much of it, namely, the *Popish Bishops and Doctors*, and how those poor *Martyrs* did by the help of the blessed Spirit, without Latin or Greek, confound those enemies of truth, and assert and maintain both the Doctrin of Justification, and other points of Christian Religion, as the History of Acts and Monuments do sufficiently declare; and though we have no cause to presume, yet we have good ground to hope and believe, that the same God, will by the same Spirit, give in the same supplies to his Servants in the same case, if he should again call them to it, or if he should call any of us to assert and maintain the blessed Doctrin of Justification, or to dispute the glorious privilege of Adoption. And whereas he saith, *page 36.* That we give out our selves to be gifted Brethren, and so fit for the work of the Ministry, &c. For my own part I do not know that ever I gave out such a word, and the Lord knows, that I have lower and meaner thoughts of my self; and truly had not the importunity and perswasions of some prevailed with me, beyond what I thought of my self, I think I had never been an eye-sore to this man in *Bristol*, nor a trouble to any others in the work of preaching; and if he or any other can make it appear to me, that it is the will of God, that I should give over my present work, I trust it is not all the Gold and Silver in *Bristol*, that should hire me to continue in it; but truly (as other things) so the violent opposition that I meet with from men of divers sorts, do much confirm that it is the will of God, that I should continue in my work of preaching, &c. And so long (though I should meet with greater difficulties than

ever I have yet done) I trust I shall go on with it, expecting the presence of Christ with me ; and his blessing upon me therein. I do not at all reflect upon those godly men, that he quotes *page 66, 67.* though I cannot but wonder that a man should express so much bitterness against *Anabaptists*, as he doth in his Book, and yet seem so to applaud a baptized man, that is a person of honor, &c. Likewise how a man can speak so contemptuously against Separation, and separated Churches, and yet seem so to applaud that eminent Dr. *Owen*, who is a man so eminently for the Congregational way, that some men call *Independency* or *Separation*; which makes me to think, that if all the people in *England* and *Bristol*, which are called *Independents* or *Anabaptists*, were great or in high places, he would love them, or make them believe so, &c.

But thirdly, for that godly man Mr. *Baxter*, whose face I never saw, yet do I highly honor & esteem for some of his works, and for what good I hear of him, yet I see no ground, why I shou'd so understand Mr. *Baxter*, or the other two, as this man seems to force their meaning; for, admit it be true, that an ungodly learned man, may know as much, or more, of the literal and grammatical sense of Scripture, than a gracious man may do, which is all that they affirm; doth it therefore follow, that a godly unlearned man, (if it were proper to call any so) may not understand and know, publish and declare the truth of Christ, to their own comfort, and the edification of others, for my own part I cannot see this to be an infallible consequence, and I am confident that two of those men are otherwise minded; and if godly Mr. *Baxter* should mean so, yet I know, there are many others of like eminency, both for Learning and Godliness, that are of another mind in this particular, as I might abundantly shew from their works that are extant, as likewise that experience God hath given us in this later age, of his owning, blessing, and prospering, such in the preaching of the Gospel, to the conversion of many souls, both in *England* and *Wales*, &c. But what I have here written may be sufficient to disprove what he doth falsely assert, *page 67.* that the
presence.

pretence of preaching by the Spirit is but a pious fraud, to set up our selves in the hearts and consciences, and consequently in the purses of people, &c. which thing he again mentions, pag 51, 52. where he jeers at my contribution, calling it a Feeling argument, &c. wherein he seems to compare me to the Lawyers, who account a good Fee to be a feeling argument in their Clyents cause: But I shall not answer him, onely as the Proverb is, *It is the property of a covetous Man to think every thing too much that another hath.* But he draws up the result of all, pag. 68. and concludes, that the in-let and out-let, the fore-door and back-door of all our miseries, is an ignorant, unlettered, and contemptible Ministry.

If by the word (*Our*) he mean our misery in *Bristol*, then I answer, Surely it is strange, that so great a flood of evil and misery should come in at so narrow a door, there being but one unlettered, uncalled Minister in *Bristol* (in his sense) all the rest (be they what they will) are learned and called, constituted and established Ministers, as he mentions again, pag. 60, &c. No doubt but the Princes of Israel, through the instigation of the Prophets, thought the like of *Jeremiah* when they were wroth with him, smote him, and put him in prison, and when they said unto the King *We beseech thee let this man be put to death, for he seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.* So likewise *Amaziah* the Priest of *Bethel*, when he sent to *Jeroboam* King of Israel, saying, *Amos hath conspired against thee, &c.* Poor *Amos* he had not indeed been bred a Prophet, neither was he the son of a Prophet, but a Herdsman and a gatherer of Summer fruit; and now he must be banished the Kings Chappel as a conspirator: this was hard measure, but God provided better for him. Reader, I do not compare myself with *Jeremiah* and *Amos*, but onely to let thee see that as *Solomon* saith, *That which hath been is now, and there is no new thing under the Sun.*

But secondly, if by the word *Our misery*, he mean the misery and calamity of *England* first or last; truly then I shall grant and say as he doth, that the in let and out let, fore-door and back-door of much of *Englands misery* (and consequently of *Bristol*) is an ignorant, ungodly, lascivious, proud, scandalous,

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Jer. 37. 15.
38. 4Amos 7. 10.
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2.

soul-murdering Ministry; who have made themselves contemptible and base in the eyes of all good men, and in the consciences of many bad. And though (as I have heard) there were two thousand of them petitioned against in the time of the long Parliament, and many of them then pluckt up by the roots both in *England* and *Wales*; besides what hath been since laid aside for scandall and insufficiency, by other Committees and Commissioners appointed for that purpose: yet I think *England* hath cause enough still to mourn for, complain of, and pray against, a great part of the Ministry thereof: I do not speak this of all, nor intend it to all; for I doubt not to affirm against the Quakers, that God hath many precious servants in the Ministry, both among those called *Presbyterians*, and them called *Independents*, and the *Baptized*, and some that are of, or under none of these names; yea, both learned and unlearned, &c. who yet are faithfull to the Lord Jesus, and do prefer the conversion and salvation of precious souls, before all the treasures in the world, and who do rejoyce to see that work of God carried on by any, either learned or unlearned, as men now speak; and I trust, that as the Lord, who holds the Stars in his right hand, will establish such; So the time is near, when men shall not wear a rough garment (or a propheticall garb) to deceive, but that the false Prophets and unclean spirits shall pass out of the Land, and that God will raise up, and give Pastors, according to his own heart, for faithful is he that hath promised, who also will do it.

And whereas he saith, page 68. That you shall know them (to wit the ignorant and unlettered Ministers) by this Badge or Character, they are separating, factious, and schismaticall, &c. I remember these were words much in use, and cast as brands upon the godly people called Puritans, by the Bishops and their Clergie about 20, or 30 years agoe, and how it comes to pass that these words are taken up again, I know not, unless it be that the same spirit that was in the Bishops and their Clergie is again revived: and if so, then they in whom it is, had best take heed that they apply those Nicknames righter than the former did, lest, &c.

But I shall give another Badge or Character of those that

I mean, and that is, you shall alwayes know them by their pride, envy, and covetousness, or their scorning, reviling and persecuting all those that differ from them; and therefore as he commends the caution and counsel of the Apostle, *Rom. 16. 17, 18.* So shall I make bold humbly to recommend the caution and counsel of our Lord Jesus Christ, *Matth. 7. 15, 16. Beware of false Prophets, &c. for by their fruits you shall know them.* I do not speak this of any godly man or men, for I know no godly men can do so as above.

Now for his closing word to the Ministers that are lawfully called, &c. if by lawfully called he mean Pastors or Elders, called, chosen, constituted, ordained and appointed to office in Churches, and by Churches, according to the New Testament, and according to the example and practice of the Churches of Christ both in New England and Old, then I freely close with him therein; for such a Calling and Ordination I own and plead for according to Scripture.

But if by Ministers lawfully called, he mean all the Parish Ministers in *England* or *Bristol* (as such) then I cannot but wonder how any man pretending to godliness, durst so to abuse that pretious Scripture, *Acts 20. 28.* and how he will be able to prove that Parishes are such Churches, and that all Parish Ministers (are such) and by the holy Ghost made Overseers in the sense of that Scripture; for my own part I must be silent, and so I think might he well have been. It is true the 29. verse may in a sense be rightly applied to some men in *England* that call themselves Ministers, who since the Apostles times, and the apostasie that followed, have like grievous Wolves entred in, not sparing the flock, &c. I write not this of, nor intend it to any godly man of any judgement whatsoever.

But as for the rest of his jerks, jeers, quibbles, scoffs, derisions, reproches and untruths, which he hath cast upon me, with all the injury and wrong that he hath (thereby) done to me, I shall lay it at my feet looking upon it as the fruits of a froathy brain, and the products of a spleenish temper, and shall not bestow a pen full of ink, or one minutes time to answer it, but do rather in my heart wish and desire, that he may so repent of this piece of folly and wretchedness, whereby he hath hardened

ned the hearts, and opened the mouthes (of many against me) that it may do his soul no more hurt another day than it doth me at present ; in the mean time I resolve to sit down in silence as to him, &c.

a young And now I return again to you *Dennis Hellister*, to close up my answer to your Book, and I cannot but take notice (as many others do) of your shamefull abusing that pretious upright servant of Jesus Christ *Robert Simpson*, though I suppose, he will clear himself, or (at least) his innocency will answer for him, and stop your mouth another day : In the mean time I cannot but bear a testimony of his integrity and your impudency, in that you do so fiercely and falsely charge him to be a liar ; whereas I can testifie that the thing was true, which he, as messenger of the Church, did admonish you of ; namely, that you should say, that the Scripture was a blind and plague to Souls ; which thing you did speak at a publick meeting in your own house, as I doubt not but there are more than twenty persons, some of the Church, and others not of the Church, who can also testifie the same. Whether your meaning was then as now you write, pag. 18, 19. I shall not dispute ; but that you did speak those words is true, and no lye invented, nor lye prosecuted, &c. Therefore if there be any liar in this thing, you are the liar ; yet I durst not judge you to the Lake, but rather pray & hope that God may shew a miracle of mercy in saving you from it, and do advise you to take heed how you throw them into the Lake, or under condemnation, whom Jesus Christ hath by his pretious blood, and perfect righteousness graciously freed from it. And as for the sin of lying, you will do well to cast the beam out of your own eye, &c. For *Robert Simpson* is a man as well known in *Bristol* to be a truth-speaker, and a just, upright, conscientious dealer, as any of those that do accuse him. I shall say no more, but let every man prove his own work, *Gal. 6. 4.*

But passing by many of those impertinencies in your book, I find that after your letter to me, there is an answer to 16. *Queries*, formerly sent to you, or to the people called *Quakers*, and afterwards printed by that pretious servant of Christ, *John Pendarves* before his death.

I might commend your wit, in putting forth your answer after the man is dead : Secondly, I observe that these sixteen *Quæries* have been once answered (in a fashion) by *James Naylor*, a man then highly admired and cried up by you, or those of your way, as a man of great infallibility, which perhaps might help to puff him up with pride, by which he came to fall into this sad condemnation, &c.

Now whereas some of your way, boast much of your being all led by one and the same Spirit, so that though they were at a great distance, yet they all speak but one thing, &c. Now let any man read and compare your answers with *James Naylors*, and see how near they come together, unless it be in railing, judging, and censuring, though therein I must needs say his answers are more moderate than yours.

And whereas a late Writer for your way, puts it by way of derision to the Preachers in *England*, that if six of the most able Doctors, should have a portion of Scripture given them to interpret, and they shut up in six several rooms, &c. that perhaps not two of the six agree in their interpretation.

Now suppose you had taken four more of your Teachers, (such as some of you had challenged the whole world to accuse of sin) and made them six in number, and have given them these sixteen *Quæries* apart to answer, perhaps they would have come as near, as you and *Naylor* do in your answers, or as six of the weakest Preachers in *England* might have done in their interpreting a place of Scripture.

As for your word to *England*, I shall say little to that, but desire rather to mourn for the evils and abominations therein, as I know it is my duty and yours also, if you knew how to do it ; and so I conclude, expecting that I shall have many sharp Arrows of bitter words shot at me, both by you and others ; but for that I matter not much, being conscious to my self, that I have written in plainness words of truth and soberness, and that have been pressed by others to do what I have done, and that rather, for the
vindi-

vindication of truth, than of my self, and rather for the
 sakes of some godly people who may read it, than for
 your sakes to whom I direct it; and if you or others, shall
 dip your pens in Vinegar or Gall to write again, I hope I
 shall bear it, or modestly reply to it, though my thoughts,
 are rather to suffer my self to be trampled upon, then a-
 gain to answer a word, seeing that of making many
 Books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the
 flesh, *Ecclesi* 12. 12. And knowing also that neither you
 nor others, can speak or write me so vile, as I can and do,
 see, and acknowledge my self to be, as in my self, yet is
 my perfection and compleatness in another, even in Christ
 Jesus my Lord; in whom is all righteousness, all strength,
 and all fulness, laid up for all those, that sensibly see and
 feel that in them, (that is in their flesh) dwelleth no good
 thing, &c. and thereupon do look unto him, to receive
 of his fulness, grace for grace; in which glorious person,
 all that do believe are justified, and by whose grace and
 blessed Spirit, they are in a measure sanctified, and through
 whose precious blood, and perfect righteousness, media-
 tion and intercession, they shall be eternally saved, and
 in whose way, I could as gladly now as ever, subscribe my
 self,

Your Friend,

T. E.

FINIS.

There is now in the Press, a Book written by Robert Purnel, entitled, A
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